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MISSIONARY RESEARCHES



IN

ARMENIAN INSTITUTION

INCLUDING A JOURNEY

THROUGH ASIA MINOR, AND INTO GEORGIA AND PERSIA,

WITH A VISIT TO THE

NESTORIAN AND CHALDEAN CHRISTIANS

OF OORMIAH AND SALMAS.

BY ELI SMITH AND H. G. O. DWIGHT,

MISSIONARIES FROM THE AMERICAN BOARD OF MISSIONS.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A Memoir on the Geography and Ancient History of Armenia,

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MODERN TRAVELLER."



LONDON:

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THESE Researches, which had for their object to ascertain what it might be practicable for the churches of Armenia to do towards the revival and reformation of the Oriental churches in Armenia, Georgia, and Persia, were undertaken under the direction and at the expense of the American Board of Missions. A large extent of territory bordering on the Mediterranean had been previously surveyed by missionaries sent out by this Board. In the year 1820, Messrs. Fisk and Parsons had made the tour of that part of Asia Minor which includes the Seven Churches. In 1823, Mr. Fisk, in company with Mr. King, ascended the Nile to Thebes; and the same missionaries, with their fellow-labourers, explored the whole of Palestine and the greater part of Syria, between 1821 and 1827. In 1827, Mr. Grindley travelled from Smyrna into Cappadocia; and in that year and the following two, Messrs. Brewer, King, Smith, and Anderson visited the Morea and the principal islands of the Ionian and Egean Seas. Tripoli and Tunis were visited by Mr. Bird in 1829. The result of these investigations was a valuable and authentic mass of information relative to the religious condition of the Greek, Coptic, and Maronite churches. Little novelty, however, could be expected in the account of countries so repeatedly and recently explored, as well by pious missionaries as



by learned and adventurous travellers in pursuit of secular objects; and the Researches of Mr. Jowett, Mr. Greaves, and Mr. Hartley, of Dr. Richardson, Mr. Dodwell, Mr. Buckingham, and others, have already put the English public into possession of very full and distinct information respecting both the topography and the moral and political state of the inhabitants. A digest of the interesting details will be found in the first six volumes of "The Modern Traveller," which are devoted to the countries belonging to sacred geography.

The case is very different as respects the countries visited by the two estimable Missionaries whose researches are here presented to the British public. English travellers have come into contact with Armenian merchants and monks in different parts of the Levant, more especially at Constantinople and Jerusalem. But these have been chiefly papal Armenians; that is, Armenians by nation, who have embraced the Romish faith, and who, as a consequence, have become, to a certain degree, denationalized.\* No direct intercourse had been opened, by any Protestant missionaries, with the Armenian Church; and the country itself, though traversed by the high route leading from Constantinople to Tabriz and the Persian capital, has almost disappeared from geography. The corner of Persia in which the remnant of the ancient Church of Seleucia survives the revolutions of seventeen centuries, is scarcely less unknown to modern Europeans; although considerable light has recently been thrown upon the physical geography of Azerbaijan by the survey executed at the command of

\* See page 20.



the late prince-governor, Abbas Mirza, by Col. Monteith, of the East India Company's service.\* From the works of La Croze and Asseman, the learned might obtain an accurate knowledge of the Nestorian Creed; but it has been reserved for two missionaries from another hemisphere, strangers from the New World, to make Western Christendom acquainted with the actual sentiments and condition of the Nestorians, as they are still found clinging to their ancient faith in the midst of Mussulman barbarism and intolerance.

The American edition of these Researches (in two volumes, 12mo.) was published at Boston last year. Mr. Smith has prefixed to the Letters, an Introduction, comprising a brief historical sketch of Armenia. In place of this, is given, in the present edition, an Introductory Memoir, in which it has been attempted to throw some further light upon both the geography and the history of ancient Armenia. The translations from the Armenian by Mr. Neumann, published under the auspices of the Royal Asiatic Society, have furnished some highly interesting illustrations of a period respecting which the lights of western history almost fail us. Of these, ample use has been made; as well as of the paper by Colonel Monteith already alluded to, and of a brief notice of discoveries made by the lamented and enterprising traveller, M. Schulz, on the borders of Lake Van, in the Paris Asiatic Journal.†

The Letters of the American Missionary are printed verbatim, as it was not deemed proper to introduce any

\* See Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. iii., part i., art. 1.

† See pp. xxiv., 402.





alterations even in the arrangement of the matter, that would affect the genuineness of the work. Any recommendation of these Letters to the attention of the Christian public would be superfluous. It has afforded the Editor no small gratification to superintend their republication in this country; and he cannot entertain a doubt that the volume will create a lively interest in the success of the labours of our American brethren, in that interesting and too long neglected field of missionary enterprise, the patriarchate of the East.

*Watford Field House,*  
*Sept. 1, 1834.*

JOSIAH CONDER.

## INTRODUCTORY MEMOIR.

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THE regions to which these Researches of the learned American Missionaries have been directed, derive a peculiar interest from having been the primeval centre of the post-diluvian world, from which all the original races diverged, as well as the scene of some of the most remarkable transactions in ancient history. Armenia is a country belonging to sacred geography. Its territory, in the earliest times, was shared between the Assyrian, the Median, and the Aramean empires. In later times, it was the border country where the rival powers of Rome and Parthia wasted their strength in a fruitless and ruinous contest for supremacy. In fact, from time immemorial to the present day, the country watered by the Upper Euphrates between Ararat and Taurus has been the theatre of perpetual war. Alternately ravaged by one or other of the contending parties, it has either been crushed by their protection, ruined by their collision, or divided between them on their coalition.

Familiar as is the name of the country, the greater part is still, however, to the topographer, *terra incognita*; and its ancient geography is involved in the greatest obscurity. The high road from Constantinople to Tabriz, *viâ* Tokat, Erzroom, and Eriván, leading through the heart of both Armenias, is, indeed, well known to mercantile and other European travellers; but vague and imperfect, at best, must be the information collected in a hurried journey under escort of a Tatar courier. Accordingly, the travels of Tournefort, Macdonald Kinneir, Morier, and Ker Porter, the chief sources of the information hitherto possessed respecting its present condition, furnish an extremely small portion of scientific description, which is limited to the provinces intersected by their routes. More recently, a learned German traveller\*, who has fallen victim to his zeal for the promotion of

\* In the year 1826, M. Schulz, Professor in the University of Giessen, undertook a journey of literary discovery in Asiatic Turkey and Persia, under the auspices of Baron Dumas,



geographical discovery, has explored the shores of the great inland lakes in the central provinces; and an English officer in the service of the late prince-governor of Tabriz, has executed an original survey of the small part of Armenia still subject to Persia, from his own observations during a tour undertaken by his Highness's orders.\* The present work, however, is by far the most valuable, relating to Armenia, that has hitherto been made public; not only on account of the important contributions which it supplies to geographical knowledge, but also from its containing an authentic and highly interesting account of its Christian inhabitants—the living relics and monuments of ancient churches, by whom, alike under the Ottoman and the Persian yoke, surrounded and intermixed with a Mohammedan population, the name and form of Christianity have been perpetuated during successive ages:—an historical phenomenon which the Author of these Researches calls upon us to view “as an indication of God’s intention ere long to restore the spirit” of that religion thus singularly preserved.

According to the statements of native writers, adopted by Mr. Smith, Armenia, in the most flourishing period of its history, was divided into fifteen provinces, which again were subdivided into almost as many cantons as there are valleys in its mountainous regions. These divisions, however, although of some importance to Armenian history, perplex rather than illustrate the geography of the country; and the greatest difficulty attends the attempt to fix their true situation and boundaries. The truth is, that the name of Armenia has been extended to a groupe of countries, inhabited by different races, subject to different governments, and probably at no time united under one monarchy. The denomination of First, Second, Third, and Fourth Armenia are of Roman origin, and denote territories assigned to tributary Armenian princes, or peopled chiefly by Armenian emigrants, but forming no part of their original country. That which is called *Armenia Minor*, in contradistinction from *Armenia Major*, from which it is divided by the north-western head of the Euphrates, cannot be regarded as properly belonging to the country known to geography under that name, since it has always been considered as part of

then Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris. Some account of his discoveries at Van appeared in the *Nouveau Journal Asiatique*, t. ii. (1828.) He was subsequently murdered near the monastery of Derrie in the valley of the Zab, by Mustafa Khan, the Kürdish chieftan of the Hukkaney territory.

\* See Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London, vol. iii. art. 1.





Asia Minor, and is distinguished by other denominations. The modern kingdom of Armenia had for its seat the Roman Cilicia. Of the other provinces, some are situated in Mesopotamia, and, though subject, at one time, to Armenian rule, are expressly distinguished, in the native records, from "the land of the Armenians," or what is still called by the Persians, *Ermenistan*. Other districts, again, included in the fifteen provinces, properly form part of Georgia and Persia.

The original Armenia, the *Minni* of the Hebrew Scriptures, was probably limited to the provinces of Eriwán and Nakhcheván, which now alone, by a singular fortune, retain, under Russian sway, that denomination. The kingdom of Ararat, referred to in the Old Testament as distinct, may be concluded to have comprised the old Armenian province of that name, together with that of Durooperan. It is a remarkable fact, that, while the valley of the Aras offered a ready descent from the mountains of Ararat, which has been a sort of highway from the time of Noah to the present day\*, the country enclosed by those mountains to the west, and south, through which the eastern head-stream of the Euphrates descends towards Mesopotamia, have remained almost unknown and inaccessible. There is reason to believe that the western writers had no knowledge of the river now known under the name of the Murad-chai, and which has the strongest geographical claim to the name of Euphrates. The region intervening between the basin of the Araxes and that of Lake Van and the head waters of the Tigris, has remained to the present day secluded from observation, and all but lost to geography. No route, ancient or modern, intersects it.† Ararat, the primeval centre of diverging nations, has remained, age after age, the great barrier between the eastern and western portions of the elder world; and it now forms, as it were, the boundary-stone of the three great empires of Russia, Turkey, and Persia, while its recesses enclose pastoral and other hardy tribes who maintain a savage independence.

The mountain to which more particularly Europeans give the name of Ararat, but which the Armenian natives know under the

\* See pages 256, 268.

† The route from Cilicia to Susa, mentioned by Herodotus, which lay through "Armenia above Assyria," crossed the Tigris, the Great and Little Zab, and the Gyndes or Kizil-ozan. Thus, it lay through Kúrdistán and Aderbaiján, but scarcely within the frontier of Armenia Proper.



name of Masis, and the Turks call *Aghur-dagh*\*, consists of two immense conical masses, one peak considerably lower than the other, rising majestically from the low valley of the Aras into the region of perpetual snow. Various efforts had been made by adventurous travellers to scale these mountain pyramids, but uniformly without success, when at length, in 1830, Professor Parrot, by dint of the most determined perseverance, overcame every obstacle, and ascertained the positive elevation of the loftier peak to be 16,200 feet above the sea, about 500 feet loftier than Mont Blanc. The summit is described as being a circular plain about 160 feet in circumference, and united by a gentle descent to the less elevated peak towards the east, which is about 13,100 feet in height. The whole of the upper region of the mountain, from the height of 12,750 feet, is covered with perpetual snow and ice; and not unfrequently, avalanches precipitate themselves down its sides with tremendous sound. The range with which it is connected, and of which it forms the termination towards the S.E., is a branch of the Caucasian chain. Sweeping round in a circuitous course towards the junction of the two head-streams of the Euphrates, it separates the valley of the Murad-chai from the basin of the Aras, and forms the great barrier which divides the Kùrdish race from the Turkish. These mountains are ultimately connected with the Cilician Taurus on the one hand, and the Corcyræan or Baktiari range on the other. In fact, all the mountains of Western Asia appear to belong to one system.

What may be denominated Armenia Proper comprises the whole of the valley of the Aras, the Mesopotamia of the Aras and the Koor, the valley of the Murad-chai or Eastern Euphrates, and part of the elevated basins of the lakes of Van and Oormiah; its boundaries on the side of Kùrdistân and Aderbajân being doubtful and varying at different periods. The latter country, the *Media Atropatene* of the ancients, is called in Armenian, *Mark*, i. e. frontier or border country; and it is probable that it has always been either neutral or disputed territory. Ancient Assyria appears to have extended northward to the boundaries of Ararat, and to have comprised the pashaliks of Van and Diarbekir with Persarmenia, including at least part of Aderbajân; answering, in fact, pretty exactly to modern Kùrdistân. The region of the northern

\* See p. 266. By the Persians, it is said to be called *Kuh-i Nuach*, the Mountain of Noah.

Euphrates, now comprised in the pashalik of Erzroom, and anciently known under the name of Garin or Upper Armenia, seems to have been always more or less connected, politically, with the western kingdoms; and on the division of the contested territories between the Byzantine and Persian empires, it fell to the share of the *Rumi* or Greeks.\* Altogether, Armenia is computed to extend about 430 miles in longitude and 300 in latitude. The following table will exhibit, as nearly as can be ascertained, the ancient and modern provincial divisions, together with their present political distribution.

ANCIENT PROVINCES.	MODERN DIVISIONS.	POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT.
Vasbooragan or Vaspurcania . . .	Eriwán and part of Van and Aderbaijáa . . . . .	Russian province of Armenia or government of Eriwán.
Sunik or Sisagan		
Phaidagaran or Paidarkaran..	The Karabaugh and Ganjeh . . . . .	Russian province of Karabaugh or government of Shoosha.
Arzakh . . . . .		
Oodi . . . . .		
Kookark . . . . .	Somkheti or Armenian Georgia . . . . .	Russian government of Tiflis.
Gorshek or Gorsjaik . . . . .	Corecyræan range and part of Aderbaijáa . . . . .	Kürdish chiefs, and Persian government of Tabriz.
Parsgahaik or Persarmenia . . .		
Ararat . . . . .	Pashaliks of Kars and Bayazeed and part of Kürdistán . . . . .	Ottoman Pashaliks.
Durooperan or Turuberan . . .		
Garin, or Upper Armenia . . .		
Daik or Dahestan . . . . .	Pashalik of Erzroom . . .	Ottoman Pashaliks.
Mogk or Moxone . . . . .	“ Akhaltsikhe or Akhiska . . . . .	
Akhznik or Alznia . . . . .	“ Moosh? . . . . .	
Fourth Armenia	“ Orfah . . . . .	
	“ Diarbekir . . . . .	
	ARMENIA MINOR.	
First Armenia . . .	Pashalik of Kaiseric (Cesarea) . . . . .	Ottoman Pashaliks.
Second Armenia		
Third Armenia . . .		



The waters to which these elevated regions give rise, and which

\* Hence the name Erzroom, corrupted from Ardzen-el-Room, so called to distinguish it from another Ardzen. (See p. 63.) According to the learned Translator of the History of Vartan, "Great Armenia," or that part which, on the division of the kingdom in A.D. 428, fell to Persia, comprised the six provinces of Ararat, Vasburagan, Sunik, Mogk, Gorshek, and Parsgahaik, with part of Durooperan. But, as the provinces of the Karabaugh, bordering on Albania, could not have belonged to "the land towards the west" which fell to the share of the Greeks, we must conclude that Arzakh, Oodi, and Phaidagaran, as well as Kookark, were not then considered as part of Armenia. Akhznik seems to answer to the Osrhoene of classic geography; and the Fourth Armenia was certainly in Mesopotamia.

Maku  
 Shann  
 in Ardes 182





are fed by the snows of the Elborz and the *Aghur-dagh*, are formed into several magnificent rivers, which flow in opposite directions to the Euxine, the Caspian Sea, and the Persian Gulf. The rapid and furious Aras (or Araxes) rises in the central mass of mountains which separate the two branches of the Euphrates, and after a long course towards the east and south-east, winds round towards the north-east, to meet the still larger Koor or Cyrus, flowing from the Georgian Caucasus. After forming an irregular delta, their united waters fall into the Caspian. The Kizil-ozan, formed by the junction of the Miana river with the waters which force their way through the mountains of the Kâflan Koh, and the Shah-rood, is considered as the boundary of Aderbaijân or the government of Tabriz. Near Menjil, this river takes the name of *Sefyd-rood* (white river), and traversing the province of Ghilan, divides into two branches, forming, like the Araxes, an extensive delta before it reaches the Caspian. The Rion or Phasis, which waters Mingrelia or the ancient Colchis, in its course to the Black Sea, derives part of its waters from the mountains of Armenia. It is formed by the Kirilla or Quirilof, flowing from Mount Elborz, and meeting the Rion at Gwertzich, twelve miles below Kautais, where the united streams become navigable for boats at all seasons to the sea. A chain of mountains branching from Caucasus, and attaining the height of about 6000 feet, divides the waters falling westward into the Rion, from those which flow in an opposite direction into the Koor. The Jorokh or Akampsis carries a part of the waters of Armenia into the Euxine; and a narrow ridge separates its basin from that of the Iris, into which the Lycus, flowing from the *Chiman-dagh*, pours its waters. The observation of the American Travellers has confirmed the accuracy of Strabo, who states that the Lycus rises in Armenia. The sources of the Erzroom river, the Euphrates of the Greek and Roman writers, are found in the same groupe of mountains.\* The great eastern branch, to which the Armenians give that name, called also the *Murad-chai*, has its source in the lofty ridge of the *Gedûk-dagh*, which separates its basin from that of the Aras, flowing by Diadeen, and meeting the Erzroom river near Kebban, in lat.  $38^{\circ} 45' N$ . In lat.  $38^{\circ} 10'$ , the united streams are joined by the *Melas* or *Kara-soo* (black river), which flows by Malatia, the ancient capital of Armenia Minor. The

\* See pp. 54, 55.

Tigris also springs from numerous sources within the Armenian territory, and, together with the Greater and Lesser Zab, may be ranked among Armenian rivers. Besides these, the great lakes of Van, or Wan, and Oormiah, are fed by numerous streams flowing from the mountains which enclose those elevated basins. The lofty mountains of Sahend, rising in the very centre of Aderbaján, between Tabriz and Maragha, to the height of 9000 feet above the sea, contain the sources of various streams, part of which flow through the district of *Hashlerood* (eight rivers) into the Kizilozan, and the rest into the lake of Oormiah. The same lake receives a stream which has its rise in the elevated plain of Ali-baug, 7500 feet above the sea, near the principal source of the Zab.\* Eight streams pour their tribute into the Lake of Van, which is believed to be not far from 240 miles in circuit: none of them, however, are of great importance.† A range of high mountains, the *Niphates* of the ancients, separates the basins of these two lakes; and the elevated plain of Mahmoodeah, 6000 feet above the sea, forms the frontier between Persia and Turkey.‡

Having given this general outline of the physical geography of the country, we shall now attempt, as a further introduction to the narrative of the learned travellers, a concise review of the History of Armenia, to which frequent references are made in the ensuing pages.

The early history of Armenia is as authentic as, in the absence of either ancient annals or extant monuments, history can be. The principal native authority is the famous Moses Chorenensis, who flourished in the fifth century, and who drew up a history of his country, commencing with Haik or Haig, the son of Togarmah, the grandson of Japhet, whom Armenian tradition makes to be the progenitor of the nation; and brought down to the extinction of the pontifical power in the house of St. Gregory the Illuminator, A.D. 440. The first part of his history is stated to be founded on information derived from records of events which happened before the death of Alexander the Great, according to the testimony of Mar Ibas, the famous Syrian historian, who discovered these documents. The story is thus told by the Vartabed, Michael Chamich or Chamchean, the author of a history of Armenia in the Armenian language, in the early part of which

\* Journal of Geographical Society, vol. iii. p. 51. † Ibid. p. 51. ‡ Ibid. p. 50.







and for killing the latter as the first introducer of idolatry among mankind!" And the testimony of Mar Ibas is cited as the authority for a personal description of this proto-champion, who is supposed to have lived to the age "*probably*," of 500 years. Haicus was succeeded in his authority by his son Armenac, who reigned for ninety-six years, and had, "it is said," twelve brothers named after the months of the year, and twenty-four sisters named after the hours of the day!! His son, Aramais, who succeeded him, reigned, some say forty, some say ninety years: in such cases, fifty years are of no consequence. He is stated to have changed the name of the river Gihon, to Arax, after his son Arast! But the first monarch who "raised the Armenian name to any degree of renown," was his great-grandson, Aram, who became so famous, that, says Father Chamich, "contemporary nations, in making mention of the actions performed by his subjects under his personal direction, called them the deeds of the Aramians, a name which has been corrupted into Armenians; and the country they inhabited, by universal consent, took the name of Armenia. This is the origin of the denomination which now distinguishes our country among foreigners; and the more ancient one of Haics, which is similar, and indeed is the juster of the two, has sunk into disuse."

Something is to be learned from all this; namely, that nothing survives, in the shape of authentic traditional record, of this part of the early history of Armenia, which is mere fable; and that, moreover, of the etymology of the name of the country, and of other geographical appellations, the narrator and his authorities were profoundly ignorant.

In the third chapter of his history, Father Chamich introduces to us a personage whose historical existence we are not permitted to doubt, although it is difficult to detach the fact from the fabulous embellishments. This is no other than Semiramis, the widow of Ninus. The Assyrian queen, having heard of the personal beauty of Arah, king of Armenia, sent him an offer of her hand and crown, which was most ungallantly refused. This led to a war, in which Arah was slain, to the great grief of the female conqueror, who had wished to take him alive. Semiramis then placed his young son, Cardus, a youth of twelve years of age, on the throne of his father, directing him to assume the name of Arah. The historian goes on to state, that "the Assyrian queen was so



pleased with the salubrity of the air, and the fertility and picturesque nature of the country, that she left a splendid mark of her munificence in it, on her returning to Assyria, having built a magnificent city on the shores of the sea of Akhthamar. Twelve thousand workmen and six hundred architects were employed in the erection of the buildings in this city. It became, thenceforward, the summer residence of Semiramis, and was afterwards known by the name of Van . . . Some few years after this event, Ninyas, the son of Semiramis, rebelled against his mother, and having formed a party vastly superior to what was attached to the queen, she was obliged to flee and take refuge in Armenia. Here she was received by Cardus with all the friendship he could demonstrate; and raising an army, he marched with her at the head of it to reduce her rebellious son. A battle ensued, in which Semiramis and her gallant ally, Cardus, were defeated and slain . . . Anushavan (the son of Cardus), on the defeat and death of his father, fell into the hands of the victor, Ninyas, who retained him captive in his palace. At the time of this unfortunate event, Anushavan was but fourteen years of age. When he attained maturity, some of the Assyrian nobles interceded on his behalf with Ninyas, and procured his release and restoration to a part of his hereditary dominions, on condition that he should pay homage for them to the Assyrians.”\*

This story, in its general outline, so far agrees with the account given by the Greek historians, that it may be suspected of having been borrowed from them. It is certain, however, that the name of the Assyrian queen is still preserved, not merely in Armenian traditions, but in connection with existing monuments. The city of Van is still known under the name of *Shamiramakert*, the city of Semiramis. According to Persian writers, Tamerlane, towards the close of the fourteenth century, endeavoured to destroy the ancient monuments of Van; but their solidity and extent foiled the utmost endeavours of his soldiers. Moses of Chorene gives a long account of the foundation of this city. Semiramis is related to have begun the work by raising an immense esplanade or platform, composed of enormous masses of rock, united by a cement of lime and sand. This construction was so solid, that it remained still entire in the time of the Armenian historian. It had not been found practicable to detach from it a single stone, owing to the

\* Avdall's Trans. vol. i. pp. 23—25.



tenacity of the cement; and the stones, he says, were so well polished and so smooth, that they had lost none of their splendour. This terrace extended for the space of several *stadia*, and under it were some spacious caverns, which, in the time of Moses of Chorene, afforded a place of refuge to the brigands of the country. These caverns appear, from his description, to have been originally intended as subterranean entrances to the fortified palace erected by Semiramis upon this platform, which recalls the works of the great Jemsheed at Persepolis. The historian, after describing the various temples, vast apartments, and subterranean treasuries, adds, that the numerous inscriptions in themselves formed an object of admiration, as, in order to trace them, it would seem that they must have known the art of rendering the stones as soft as wax. This romantic description accords with the notices contained in more modern Armenian writers respecting the ancient monuments found near Van. In an Armenian work on geography; composed by Father Luke Indjidjan, and printed at Venice in 1806, occurs the following passage, for which we are indebted to a French translation by M. Saint-Martin.

“To the north of the city, in a straight line, is a very high mountain of stone, the summit of which is above gun-shot; it is there that was excavated and founded the impregnable castle of Van, the work of Semiramis. This mountain is composed of a hard stone of a particular species: it extends from west to east for the distance of an hour’s journey. The foot of the mountain, on the south, is contiguous to the city walls; there is situated the suburb. This wall and the castle are half an hour’s distance from the lake. The exterior side of this mountain, that is to say, that which is to the north of the plain, is a very steep elevation, filled with enormous rocks: the walls have been repeatedly destroyed and re-constructed.

“In the interior of this rock are found, in five or six places, immense caverns, hollowed out by the ancients: the entrances are turned towards the city side, or the south. Other caverns are to be seen on the northern side of the mountain. They are now quite abandoned. These are the excavations, the caverns, the vaults, of which Moses of Chorene speaks.

“On the southern side is seen an opening cut with the greatest labour in the hardest marble, leading to a very beautiful apartment, the ceiling of which is in the form of a vault: on the whole





length of the opening are found inscriptions in a character unknown to the inhabitants. This entrance leads into the centre or heart of the mountain. The inhabitants find it very difficult to reach it with ladders, either from above by the citadel, or from below by the city. On the north side are found, in like manner, towards the bottom of the mountain, three openings, which also lead to apartments with ceilings in the form of a vault, and on the doors of which are in like manner seen inscriptions in the same unknown characters. These are, probably, the inscriptions in ancient letters, cut by order of Queen Semiramis, to which Moses of Chorene refers. Upon both the northern and southern sides of this mountain of stone are sculptured, in several places, little crosses and human figures. Not long ago, in digging in the interior of the city, a stone statue was found, representing a man on horseback.

“This mountain and its fortress are without water; but, in time of peace, there exists an easy way by which you may ascend the mountain on the western side, near the gate *Iskele Kapousi*: by this way, water is carried to those who reside in the castle. In that direction is found a spring of excellent water, which flows into the lake. Near this stream are seen three immense blocks of marble, which are abandoned; and near them a ruined tower; but in the plain is found another source of good water.”\*

\* *Nouveau Journal Asiatique*, t. ii. pp. 168—170. In a letter from M. Schulz, dated Constantinople, March 1828, and inserted in the same journal, is given the following account of the results of the learned Traveller's visit to Van. “You will probably learn with pleasure, that the expectation which we entertained of discovering some monuments of Semiramis on the borders of Lake Van, has not been disappointed. The great number of inscriptions in the cuneiform character which I have discovered at Van and in its environs, and of which I have this day transmitted a copy to the minister for foreign affairs, will prove to you the important part which the castle of Van and the surrounding district must have borne in the history of the ancient Assyrian monarchy. The system of cuneiform writing, on all these monuments, is entirely different from that which is presented to us in the trilingual Persian inscriptions, and from that of the Babylonian bricks. Among the forty-two inscriptions which I send to Paris, you will find but a single one which belongs to the systems known in Europe. It is modern, if it is allowable so to call an inscription in the Zend, Assyrian, and Median languages, cut in the rock of the citadel of Van, by order of *Khshêarsha*, son of *Darcioush* (Xerxes, son of Darius). I took great pains to bring away each character with the greatest exactness. . . . It required many fortunate circumstances to enable me to bring away all; and it will probably be a long time before we meet in Kùrdistân with an Isaak Pasha, whose perfect confidence and friendship have permitted me to penetrate to places to which, under other circumstances, it would have been impossible for me to gain access. In returning to Erzroom, I followed the borders of the lake by Awanz, Berghiri, and Ardjish, where the famous Serpent-rock (*Ilantach*) afforded me two inscriptions of the same description as those of Van. Thence I repaired, by Norshin and Tashkent, to Melezgerd and Daher, to obtain, near that Kùrdish village, a copy of a magnificent inscription of thirty-seven lines, in as excellent preservation as if written only yesterday.”

But do these inscriptions, and the monuments upon which they are found, really belong to so remote a date? Upon this point, M. Saint-Martin candidly avows the doubt he entertains. He had not been able to ascertain that the name of Semiramis occurred in

Diodorus Siculus describes some magnificent monuments erected by Semiramis in Media, under which name this part of Armenia, now the Turkish pashalik of Van, is often included or confounded. It is, therefore, as M. Saint-Martin suggests, very possible, that some of the monuments which he mentions, are the same as those described by Moses of Chorene. Strabo also speaks of immense walls executed by Semiramis, and of vast artificial hills which she caused to be erected in several places of Asia Minor and Armenia. An Arabian writer (Masoudy), who flourished about the middle of the tenth century, also refers to the conquests and works of Semiramis; borrowing his details, apparently, from Greek and Syrian writers now unknown to us. The celebrity of this queen has perpetuated itself to the present day, in these same regions, not only among the Armenian population, but even among the Kürds, who, as well as the Armenian natives, give the name of the water (or stream) of Semiramis (*Shamiramai-dchour* or *Shamiramai-ahrou*) to a considerable stream which falls into Lake Van at a short distance to the S. W. of that city. The Turks call it *Shamiram-soo*, which has the same meaning.

On the death of Anushavan, who died without issue, the crown of Armenia is stated to have fallen to a warlike prince, named Paret, the contemporary of the Hebrew patriarch Joseph. To him succeeded Arbak, Zavan, and Pharnak, the latter of whom was conquered, but restored to his kingdom, by Sesostris, king of Egypt. "After the departure of the latter from Armenia, Pharnak built a number of fortresses in his dominions to protect himself against future invasions. At this period, the children of Israel quitted Egypt. On the death of Pharnak, Soor became the king of Armenia. He proved a great and successful warrior, and was the idol of his subjects. During his reign the children of Israel took possession of Canaan as the land of promise. Many of the aborigines of that country took refuge in Armenia, under the con-

them. He thinks, however, that the trilingual description referring to Xerxes, the son of Darius, is the most modern of these inscriptions, and that the others are in Assyrian, and belong to the most ancient eras of history. At all events, the terrace would seem to be fairly attributable to the Assyrian queen; and the fact of her having conquered Armenia, which is not mentioned by any extant classic historian, may be considered as established by the traditions exclusively preserved by Armenian writers. Herodotus briefly mentions this queen as having "raised an embankment worthy of admiration through the plain of the Euphrates, to confine the river, which heretofore often spread over the level like a lake." (Taylor's Herodotus, p. 87.) The principal works at Babylon, however, he ascribes to Queen Nitocris, to whom he assigns the palm of intelligence, although the former is the favourite of tradition. Possibly, the embankment referred to was that on the shores of Lake Van, and the old Grecian may have confounded the two stories.





duct of a leader named Canaanidas ; a man, as the records state, of immense riches. From him the Canaanidians, otherwise the Gunthunians, who are well known in the annals of our history, are descended.”\*

Then follow notices of the reigns of Havanak, alias Hunak, Vashtak, Haytak I., who subdued Amindes, king of Assyria, and made him his tributary, but was defeated and slain by Belok, the son of Amindes ;—Ambak I., Arnak, Shavarsh I., Norayr, Vistam, Car, Gorak, and Hirant I., in whose reign, “Buz, the son of Neptune, founded the city of Byzantium !” To Hirant succeeded Unzak, Gilak, Horo, and the illustrious Zarmayr, who, being an ally of the Trojans, went to the famous siege of their city, and fell in an encounter with Achilles, in the twelfth year of his reign, and in the year of the world 2818, or, according to the Septuagint, 4017. Chronologists will be infinitely indebted to Father Chamich for this invaluable piece of information. With regard to the long line of princes with names ending in *ak*, (recalling the Anak and Shishak of the Old Testament,) if they rest upon any veritable record, we may conclude, that at least the termination is honorific, implying lord or ruler, and that they belonged to the same dynasty of kings or viceroys. An interregnum is stated to have ensued upon the death of Zarmayr ; and then follow some more rulers with names ending in *ak* ; till at length we come to Paroyr, who joined with Arbaces, prince of the Medes, and Belesis, surnamed Nabonazar, prince of Babylon, in a conspiracy against Sardanapalus, the Assyrian emperor. Up to this time, it is admitted that the Armenian kings had never been crowned : in other words, they were but governors appointed by the Assyrian monarch, or tributary princes. But, on the expulsion of Sardanapalus, Arbaces, agreeably to his promise to his two allies, solemnly crowned them kings of their respective countries ; no doubt on the condition of their transferring their homage from Assyria to Media. “Assyria,” continues the historian, “by the succession of various events, was, after the expulsion of Sardanapalus, at first governed by Tiglath-pileser, then by his son Shalmanazar, who conquered Samaria. Sennacherib, the son and successor of the latter, in an expedition against the Jews, then governed by King Hezekiah, lost the whole of his army by the sword of the avenging angel. On his return to Nineveh, he was

\* Avdall's Trans. vol. i. p. 27.



plunged into the bitterest grief by the reflection of the late defeat and destruction of his soldiers; and, superstitiously conceiving that the anger of the gods he worshipped was kindled against him, he meditated endeavouring to appease them by the sacrifice of his sons, Adramelech and Sharezer, on the altar of the idol Nisroch. The two intended victims, however, got timely information of the cruel designs of their unnatural father, and seizing their opportunity, killed Sennacherib in the temple of Nisroch. They then took refuge in Armenia, where they were kindly received by King Paroyr, who allotted them portions of land for their maintenance. To Sharezer he gave a territory in the south-western part of Armenia, bordering on Assyria. The Sanasoons, or Sasoons, a numerous and valiant race, who principally inhabited Mount Sion, claim Sharezer for their ancestor. The king gave Adramelech a country to the south-east of that of his brother Sharezer. From Adramelech are descended the great tribes of the Arzunians and Gnunians. The posterity of these two Assyrian princes, in the course of a few ages, became so numerous, that they established an independent kingdom in the country in which their ancestors had first settled, calling it Vaspurakan, and themselves Vaspurakanians.”\*

To Paroyr succeeded Hirachay, Pharnavaz II., Pachoych, Cornak, Phavos, Haykak II. The latter “joined Nebuchadnezzar the Great, king of Babylon, in his expedition among the Jews, and on the latter being led into captivity, Haykak took one of their chiefs, named Shambat, together with all his family, and brought him into Armenia. From Shambat are descended the great family of the Bagratians, who afterwards possessed the throne of Armenia, and who derived their name from the illustrious Bagarat, who shed such a lustre on the reign of Valarsaces. Many of the most distinguished of this race were called Sumbat, after their original ancestor; and a few took the name of Ashot, in memory of Asood, the son of this Jewish chief.”†

Haykak II. was succeeded by his son Erwand; whose successor, Tigranes, is represented as having joined Cyrus, king of Persia, and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in an alliance against Ahasuerus, king of Media. From this may be inferred, if we may attach credence to this part of Armenian history, that the country had become tributary to Media, and that Tigranes was a

\* Avdall's Trans. vol. i. pp. 33, 34.

† Ibid. pp. 35, 36.



Median viceroy who raised the standard of rebellion against his liege. We have a somewhat romantic story of the Median emperor's having solicited the hand of Tigrana, the sister of Tigranes, in marriage, with a view to get the brother into his power. Tigrana accordingly became queen of queens; but, retaining her affection for her brother, she betrayed to him the insidious designs of her husband, and at length escaped to the allied armies, who were advancing to the frontiers.

“Ahasuerus made a faint attempt to protect his dominions; but he was defeated, and fell by the hand of Tigranes, who killed him by a thrust of his spear. A vast number of Medes fell in the action, and 10,000 were made prisoners, among whom were the whole of the women belonging to the king. The country then submitted to the victors, and Cyrus added it, by consent of Tigranes, to his own dominions. The latter returned to Armenia loaded with booty, and attended by a vast number of captives. In gratitude to his sister, he gave her the city of Tigranakert, which he had lately built, with a large extent of country in its environs. The women of Ahasuerus, with the remainder of the captives, he settled near Nackjuan (Nakhchevan) and along the banks of the river Arax.

“The descendants of these women, proceeding from the king of Media, were thenceforward called the offspring of Ajdahak or the Dragon, in allusion to the name of Ahasuerus, which, in the Armenian language, signifies a dragon. At this period, Cyrus, accompanied by Tigranes, effected the conquest of Lydia, which was then in the possession of Cræsus, but was now added to the large empire of the former. Shortly after, the two monarchs besieged and took the city of Babylon, which was given to Darius, the uncle of Cyrus, who thenceforward governed it under the title of king. All the Christian nations are in possession of authentic accounts of Tigranes being associated with Cyrus in his conquest of Babylon; for the prophet Jeremiah exclaims, ‘Set ye up a standard in the land; blow the trumpet among the nations; prepare the nations against her (Babylon); call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars.’ See chap. li. verse 27, &c. It is evident, by the chronology of the Jews and Armenians, that, at the capture of Babylon, Tigranes was king of Ararat. After a glorious reign of forty-five



years, in which his glory had eclipsed that of all his predecessors, Tigranes died, to the great regret of all the nation, leaving three sons, born of his Queen Zarina, viz. Bab, Tiran, and Vahagn. The great conqueror Cyrus died five years before his ally Tigranes.

“Vahagn, although the youngest son of the late monarch, took possession of the throne at the decease of his father: his two elder brothers, being of a less warlike disposition, quietly relinquished their claims. This prince proved a virtuous and magnanimous character. His personal strength and courage were so great, that he was usually called by his subjects Hercules the Second. He performed many gallant exploits, and became so renowned, that songs in his praise were composed and sung by the Armenians and Georgians; wherein, amongst a variety of other valiant actions, he was said to have fought and conquered dragons. This alluded, no doubt, to his wars with the Medes, the descendants of Ahasuerus, who, as we have related, were called the Dragons. These songs were current in Armenia even in the days of the most flourishing state of Christianity in that country. Vahagn died after a brilliant reign of twenty-seven years. A statue of this monarch was erected in Georgia by the inhabitants of that country, in commemoration of his many great qualities; and, according to the pagan custom in those days, divine honours were paid him, sacrifices being offered to the statue. From this prince the tribe of Vahunians are descended, many of whom afterwards officiated as priests in temples which they had erected to their ancestor, who, as we before stated, had been deified.”\*

The Ahasuerus of the above story is of course the Astyages of Herodotus, whose account of Cyrus is the most unsatisfactory and confused portion of his history. The “Father of History” seems to have been himself bewildered by the conflicting accounts he obtained of this extraordinary personage, the hero of Xenophon, and the restorer of Jerusalem. Sir John Malcolm has taken great pains† to harmonize the accounts given in the Persian annals, of Kai Khosrou, who is apparently the Cyrus of Herodotus, with the intimations in the Hebrew Scriptures relative to Koreish (as his name is there written), and the other notices contained in authentic history; but with very imperfect success. The irreconcilable discrepancy which occurs in the accounts of this hero, furnished by the western and the oriental writers, compel us to suppose that dif-

\* Avdall's Transl. vol. i. pp. 40—44.

† See Hist of Persia, vol. i. pp. 220—233.





ferent individuals have been confounded under the same name, which was probably titular. It is remarkable, that both Herodotus and the Armenian historians represent the Median sovereign to have been forewarned in dreams of the overthrow of his power, although the stories differ widely in the details. The account given in the present History, is, that Ahasuerus beheld a mountain in labour, from which issued, not a mouse, but three armed warriors; one mounted on the back of a lion, which he guided towards the west, the second riding on a leopard, which took a northerly direction, the third, the most terrible of the three, on a dragon, who turned towards Media. This third was explained by his wise men to mean Tigranes, the other two being Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar. Some vague tradition must have been the foundation of the varying legends. *Ajdahak*, which, we are told, signifies a dragon, is evidently the Zohauk of the Persian writers, as it is apparently the Astyages of Herodotus. Ahasuerus was a common titular appellation of the Persian monarchs, and is rendered by Gesenius, "excellent prince," or "hero." M. Saint Martin reads, in an inscription brought from Van, *khshahîè-ïéré*, which he renders, *roi brave*.

Vahagn is stated to have been succeeded by his son, Aravan; then follow the names of Nerseh, Zareh, Armog, Baygam, Van, (who is said to have rebuilt the city of Semiramis, and changed its name to Van,) and Vahey, the last of the dynasty. Being the ally (probably the tributary) of Darius, the Persian king, he joined him in resisting the invincible arms of the Macedonian conqueror, and perished. "The whole of Armenia fell into the hands of Alexander; and from this period, royalty was unknown in Armenia until the rise of the Arsacidæ."

Having traced the imperfect and obscure annals of Armenia to the dawn of authentic history, we may here pause to offer a few general observations. And in the first place, we may remark, that this history tends to confirm a rational scepticism as to the existence, in early times, of any extensive consolidated empires. A delusion is practised upon the imagination, by applying to ancient kingdoms, which were limited to a province, the comprehensive names of modern geography. There was no such country in ancient geography, as Armenia, or Persia, or India. With regard to the first, we learn from the only authentic source of information relative to those early times, that Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz still



formed, about B.C. 600, three separate kingdoms; that the Medes also had their several kings, and captains, and rulers; that Babylon, one of the greatest and most powerful kingdoms, was limited to Chaldea, not including Assyria, which had also its king. In fact, the axiom laid down by a high authority, seems the key to ancient history; that there were as many kings as cities. Every capital city constituted in fact a kingdom; and we may add, that every such city must have owed its formation to its position in the line of commerce. The first city that we read of, is ascribed to the "mighty hunter," or plunderer, Nimrod, the "beginning of whose kingdom" was Babylon, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, all in the plain of Shinar or Mesopotamia, and commanding, therefore, the commerce of the Euphrates; out of which land, he is represented as going into Assyria, and building Nineveh, and Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen, situated between Calah and Nineveh.\* All these cities, if built by the same enterprising "rebel," may have been originally fortified stations, by means of which he secured the plunder exacted in the shape of toll or tribute upon the merchants. These would of necessity be halting-places, and would soon be made places of rendezvous and permanent residence. No sooner, however, did they grow considerable, than they became the seat of rival communities; and Babylon and Nineveh at a very early period rose into hostile states. The inferior cities in their neighbourhood, under their respective chieftains, would require and purchase, by tribute or homage, the protection of the more powerful ones; and those which were united by a common language or religion, would naturally form a national league. Such, there is every reason to believe, was the origin of the territorial kingdoms of antiquity. But besides these, there were sovereignties or lordships of a very distinct origin and character, among the nomadic and equestrian tribes; between whom and the dwellers in cities, there seem to have existed in all ages a perpetual antipathy and hereditary feud. These kings of the mountain, or of the plain, or of the desert, were sovereigns of a tribe or a nation, not of a kingdom, having often neither definite country nor capital.

Ancient history, then, is either the history of nations or of municipal communities; not of countries or of empires. At least, the only empires were either confederacies of kingdoms under a "king of kings,"—the most powerful sovereign of his day, or the me-

\* Gen. x. 9. marg. reading, and Boothroyd.





teoric dominion of a foreign conqueror. The only permanent trace of such conquests is found in a new city, often raised upon the site of a ruined one, but sometimes on a new and advantageous route. Thus, it forms at once the most important and the most honourable information that is transmitted to us concerning the kings and conquerors of those remote days, that they built such and such a city. Of Semiramis, for instance, this historical fact alone attests the existence and the success; that she built the city of Van, where probably no city had before stood, and thus created a new focus of population and wealth.

At no period, probably, was Armenia comprised under one empire. The centre of the original population of the post-diluvian world, its physical geography in a manner compelled the increasing families to diverge in the opposite directions in which its waters seek the basins of the Euxine, the Caspian, the Persian Gulf, and, but for the great bulwark of Taurus, the Mediterranean. The cities and territories of Van, Nakhchevan, Eriván, Kars, Erzroom, and Diarbekir, or the more ancient cities they represent, must always have been politically disconnected, from their local position, standing on different routes, and open to invasion from different powers. It is probable, therefore, that Assyria, Media, Syria, and Cappadocia, in the earliest times, shared the dominion or allegiance of what we now call Armenia; just as it is now subdivided between the Ottomans, the Persians, the Russians, and the Kourds. It was, as we shall see hereafter, by sharing in the *western* civilization, that this country became the seat of any thing deserving the name of literature. The first light that shone upon it proceeded from Athens; and the chief seat of the Armenian greatness has been on the European side of the Euphrates, in Cappadocia and Cilicia. The existing cultivation and literature of Armenia are exclusively Christian.

The third part of Father Michael Chamich's history comprises a period of 580 years, during which Armenia is represented to have been subject to the Arsacidan princes. This includes one of the obscurest portions of oriental history. From the death of Alexander till the reign of Ardisheer Bâbigan, five centuries elapsed, respecting which the extant annals of the East exhibit almost a complete blank. The accounts of this period given by the Persian writers are at once vague and contradictory. "They have evidently," remarks Sir John Malcolm, "no materials to form



an authentic narrative; and it is too near the date at which their real history commences, to admit of their indulging in fable. Their pretended history of the Ashkanians and Ashganians, is, consequently, little more than a mere catalogue of names; and even respecting these, and the dates they assign to the different princes, hardly two authors agree. . . . And yet, when we refer to the pages of Roman writers, we find this period abound with events of which the vainest nation might be proud; and that Parthian monarchs, whose names cannot now be discovered in the history of their own country, were the only sovereigns upon whom the Roman arms, when that nation was in the very zenith of its power, could make no impression.”\*

The founder of the Arsacidan or Parthian dynasty, the Persian writers, influenced probably by national vanity, would make to have been descended from one of the former sovereigns of Persia. After he had slain the Syro-Macedonian governor, he is said to have fixed his residence at Rhé, or Rhages, in the north-western part of Media. Father Michael Chamich informs us, wherever he obtained his information, that this prince Arsaces “was descended from Abraham by Keturah,” and that, having succeeded in throwing off the Seleucidan yoke, he “established himself in the city of Bahl, in the land of Cassœi.” The country of the *Cossœi*, which must be here intended, is that part of the ancient Syro-Media which now bears the name of Looristan.

Whether Arsaces was himself a Parthian, a Bactrian Greek, a Median, or a Kourid, is quite uncertain, and not very material. It is remarkable, that, in the oriental form of his name, Ashak or Arsak, we seem to have the same honorific termination that occurs in the long line of Assyrian or Armenian princes. The date of his successful revolt is fixed about B.C. 250. Father Chamich places it A.M. 3754, which answers to that date; assigning to the first Arsaces a brilliant reign of thirty-one years, and to his son Artaces one of twenty-six years. Arsaces II., surnamed the Great, is stated to have been the grandson of the founder of the dynasty; and to him is ascribed the conquest of Armenia and Cappadocia, in the fortieth year of his reign, about 149 years B.C. The government of those provinces, together with Atropatene (Aderbaijan), he is stated to have committed to his brother Valarsaces, who accordingly established his court at Nisibis in Mesopotamia. This

\* Malcolm's Hist. of Persia, vol. i. pp. 84—88.



Valarsaces is represented as having pushed his conquests towards the north-west, and subdued Cappadocian Pontus, as well as some other territories; after which, profound peace being established, he turned his attention to the improvement of his kingdom and people, in which he was assisted by Bagarat, his *Jewish* minister; and he closed a prosperous reign of twenty-two years at Nisibis, A.M. 3873 or B.C. 131.

✕ All this is something between fact and fiction. According to the western historians, the Parthians, under the second Arsaces, first gained possession of Media during the wars between Antiochus the Great and Ptolemy Philopator. They were afterwards driven out of that province; and, after a long conflict, a treaty of peace was entered into, by which the Arsacidan chief was confirmed in the possession of Hyrcania and Parthia (*i. e.* part of Khorasan), on condition of becoming an ally or tributary of the Seleucidan monarch. Bactra was at this time the seat of an independent Greek dynasty. The son and successor of the second Arsaces was, according to Justin, surnamed Priapatius. He left his crown to his eldest son Phraates, after whose death succeeded Mithridates his brother, by whom the Syrian monarch, Demetrius Nicator, was taken prisoner, B.C. 141. Of this Mithridates, it is recorded by Diodorus and Orosius, that, "having subdued the Medes, the Elymæans, the Persians, and the Bactrians, he extended his dominions into India beyond the boundaries of Alexander's conquests, and, having vanquished Demetrius, finally secured Babylon and Mesopotamia to his empire, so that henceforth he had Euphrates on the west, as well as the Ganges on the east, for the limits of his empire." And we have the authority of Justin for adding, that, "having conquered several nations, he gathered from every one of them whatsoever he found best in their constitutions, and then out of the whole collection made a body of most wholesome laws for the government of his empire." In fact, he would seem to have been a prototype of Alp Arselan and Tamerlane,—a Scythian Napoleon. But what was this empire? So entirely did it consist in personal ascendancy, that, in the reign of Phraates, the next Parthian monarch, it had shrunk again within the narrow limits of the first Parthian kingdom.

As Mithridates appears to have been an honorific surname, and Arsaces a titular appellative, we run little risk of error in concluding this extraordinary conqueror, the founder of the Par-



thian greatness, to be the Arsaces the Great of the Armenian historian, who must have been the fifth of the dynasty. Whether Valarsaces was not the same person, may reasonably be questioned. At the same time, Nisibis could never have been chosen as the capital of an empire like that of Mithridates: it was rather a frontier station, and became, in subsequent times, an object of repeated contest between the Persians and the Romans. Father Chamich places it in "Lower Armenia;" but it is, in fact, situated in that part of Mesopotamia which formed the little kingdom or state of Osrhoene, long tributary to the Romans, and annexed to the empire about ten years before the fall of the Parthian monarchy. Shahpoor, the second of the Sassanian dynasty, recovered this territory, and took Nisibis after a long siege; but, towards the close of the third century, the Romans had regained possession, not only of Mesopotamia, but of the greater part of K urdistan, which had previously belonged to the kingdom of Armenia; in compensation for which, Teridates, the Armenian monarch, who was in alliance with the Romans, is stated to have obtained Atropatene (Aderbaijan), and to have made Tabriz his capital. The Arsacidan or Parthian empire appears to have had no fixed capital. "The Parthian monarchs," says Gibbon, "like the Mogul sovereigns of Hindostan, delighted in the pastoral life of their Scythian ancestors; and the Imperial camp was frequently pitched in the plain of Ctesiphon on the eastern bank of the Tigris."

Nothing can be more clumsy and confused than Father Michael Chamich's narrative of the Arsacidan period; nor is it possible to glean from the chance-medley of historical names, a single fact to be relied upon. In chapter vi., we find it stated that Artavazd I., the son of Tigranes II., having been appointed by his father to the government of the province of Ararat, on his accession to the throne of the Arsacidæ, first transferred the seat of empire from Nisibis in Mesopotamia to Ararat, about B.C. 39. This would imply, if properly interpreted, the expulsion of the Parthian or Arsacidan sovereign of Nisibis by the Romans, and his taking refuge in Armenia. But, as we have already remarked, Nisibis could never have been any thing more than either a frontier post, or the capital of a petty state. And such we know it to have been in fact. It was a Greek city, the name of which the Armenians tortured into *Midpsin*. We cannot resist the strong impression,





that the annals of a number of distinct principalities have been jumbled together under the names Arsacidan, Parthian, &c., and that the Parthian empire was never any thing more than a confederacy of these, under either a generalissimo or elective head. The Scythic Parthians might be called in as allies, or might appear as invaders; but the Parthian power is always found to partake of a Greek character, and was probably directed by Greek leaders.

At length we approach a period upon which the lights of western history shed a faint gleam. Among the kings of Armenia, who are represented as reigning at Nisibis, but who in fact were sovereigns only of Osrhoene, we find the name of Abgar, who is stated to have succeeded his father Arsham B.C. 5. This prince is referred to by Gibbon as the "last king of Edessa," and who "was sent in chains to Rome." The Armenian historian makes him to have repaired thither of his own accord, to remove the unfavourable impressions created in the Emperor's mind by his enemies, as well as to renew and confirm the treaty which existed between the Armenians and the Romans. Augustus is stated to have treated him with kindness, and to have permitted him to return to Armenia; but in the reign of Tiberius, the Armenians made a fresh effort to shake off the Roman yoke. This same prince, having heard of the fame of Jesus of Nazareth, is stated to have sent an envoy to Jerusalem, with a letter to Our Lord, beseeching him to cure him of some disease under which he laboured, and inviting him to take up his residence at his court. He also sent a painter with them, in order that, if the Blessed Saviour would not come, he might possess a portrait of him. "The messengers, on their arrival at Jerusalem, wished for an opportunity to present the letter of Abgar to Christ, but, not presuming to approach him, they applied to Philip, one of his apostles, and said, 'We wish to see Jesus and deliver a message to him.' Philip thereupon called Andrew, and informed him of the desires of the messengers, and they both then went to Jesus to acquaint him with the object of the messengers' visit. Jesus testified much joy at the contents of Abgar's letter, and he directed the apostle Thomas to write a reply to it, dictated from our Lord's own mouth. In this letter, our Saviour says: 'When I shall rise to my glory, I will send you one of my disciples, who shall remove your pains, and give life to you and those around you.' It is related,

that, as the painter before-mentioned was endeavouring to take the features of our Lord, Christ took a handkerchief, and passing it over his sacred face, miraculously impressed on it an admirable likeness of his countenance, and giving it to Ananey, the courier, desired him to take it to his master, as a reward for his faith. Abgar, on receiving the letter and portrait, worshipped the sacred semblance of our blessed Redeemer, and ordering them to be preserved with great care, waited the fulfilment of our Lord's promise. After the ascension of Christ, Thomas the Apostle, according to the desire of Jesus, sent Thaddeus, one of the seventy, to Abgar at Edessa. Thaddeus, on his arrival, instructed the king in the faith, and baptized him with all the people of Edessa.\*

Lardner has satisfactorily disposed of this legend, which is given with some variations by Eusebius. He considers the whole story as the fiction of some Christian at Edessa in the time of Eusebius, or not long before. Father Michael follows it up with an account of a visit paid by Bartholomew the Apostle to Armenia, bearing with him the portrait of the Virgin Mary. Jude also, he tells us, came into Armenia, and suffered martyrdom at Ormi (Ourmia?). Not satisfied with this, he makes some of the bones of the Apostle Thomas to have been brought into the same country. So much for Armenian church history.

According to the more respectable authorities cited by Mr. Neumann, the learned translator of the "History of Vartan," Christianity was first established in Armenia in the fourth century. The Armenians, he says, were the first nation converted as such to the Christian faith. "Teridates the Great (in Armenian *Dertad*, *i. e.* the given of God), and a large portion of the Armenian people, as early as the year 302 of our era, received baptism from the Parthian prince, Gregory the Enlightener. This apostle of Armenia was instructed in the Christian doctrine at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, and was consecrated pastor of the newly-converted country, about the year 312, by Leontius, bishop of that city, who signed the decree of the Council of Nice. Gregory was one of the most distinguished men of Oriental Christendom. Devoted, heart and soul, to the new light, he endured all imaginable sufferings for the doctrine of Christ, and evinced an inventive spirit in all earthly means by which the heavenly plant might be made the more securely to thrive. At his command and that of the king,

\* Avdall's Transl. vol. i. pp. 106, 107.





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schools were established, in which the children, especially those of heathen priests, were instructed in the new doctrine, and in the Greek and Syriac languages. The heathen priests themselves were chosen by preference, as teachers of the Word of God, and were left in possession of all the advantages attached to heathen observances, and all the emoluments accruing from heathen ceremonies. The heathen altars were overthrown, and in their stead, and on their sites, Christian temples were erected. The first Christian church in Armenia was raised at Ashdishad, or Hashdishad, in the province of Duroperan, on the very spot where formerly a statue of Hercules had stood. This most ancient Christian temple of the country is, therefore, called *the Mother Church*.

“The sons and successors of Saint Gregory (since 332) were either wanting in the courage and firmness of the original founder, or were less favoured by circumstances. Heathenism again appeared in many provinces of the country; and an entire century elapsed before Sahag the Great, and Mesrob and his disciples, were able to suppress the original faith of their ancestors. And even they seem not to have wholly effaced every vestige of the ancient religion from the memory of the inhabitants.”\*

Such were the natural results of the method which appears to have been adopted to force a new faith upon a still pagan nation. But the Christianity of the fourth century was no longer the faith which had in its own pristine energy conquered the world. Long before the days of Gregory the Enlightener, the faith of Christ must have penetrated from Edessa and Ctesiphon, on the one hand, and from the cities of Pontus, Cappadocia, and Cilicia, on the other, to the very recesses of Armenia. But if the golden lamps had begun to burn dim in the favoured churches of Asia Minor, is it to be wondered at, that, on the very confines of civilization, the darkness of heathenism should have utterly quenched the knowledge of the true faith? “The religious wars

\* Pref. to Hist. of Vartan, p. viii. Gregory studied at Athens, where the Armenian youth had their own principal. Sahag and Mesrob also sent their most highly talented pupils to Greece, it being their especial object to form a body of good translators from the Greek. The most important result was the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Armenian from the Septuagint, which had been first attempted from the Syriac. From the return of their disciples from the schools of Athens, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Edessa, about A.D. 434, Mr. Neumann dates the most ancient epoch of Armenian literature. The composition of the Armenian alphabet is ascribed to Mesrob, A.D. 406. The Armenian version of the Bible is the oldest Armenian book extant.





between the Armenians and the Persians," which form the subject of Bishop Elisæus's history, bespeak an era of church history symbolized by the rider on the red horse, to whom "power was given to take peace from the earth." (Rev. vi. 4.) In the first age, Christianity was the conqueror, while Christians triumphed by "the irresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness." But when Christians, instead of martyrs, became combatants, they might seem to triumph, but Christianity ceased to conquer. Religion suffered in proportion as her ministers rose in power and dignity. "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." When the church became "of this world," as a natural consequence, her servants *did* fight.

Elisæus, the author of the historical work translated by Mr. Neumann, was a disciple of Sahag the Great, and of Mesrob, the composer of the Armenian alphabet. He was secretary to the Armenian general, Vartan, and afterwards bishop of the canton Arakadsoden in the province of Ararat, with the title of "bishop of the Amaduniuns." Besides this historical work, he is said to have left behind him, exegetical illustrations of the books of Joshua and Judges, and of the Lord's Prayer, with other theological compositions. In his old age, he withdrew to the canton Ershedunik, in the province of Vasbooragan, on the shores of Lake Van, where he died at a very advanced age.

The work opens at the precise point at which Moses of Chorene, and Goriun, "the Xenophon of Armenian literature," break off; viz. at the death of Mesrob, who was succeeded in the patriarchal dignity by the *Katholicos* Joseph. Moses commences his last chapter but one with the following words, which will serve as an introduction to the narrative of Elisæus. "After Varram II. (the Baharam of the Persian annals, and the Varanes of Roman history) had reigned twenty-one years over the Persians, he died (in 439), and left the government to his son Yasgerd II. (Yezdijird, Isdigertes). This prince, immediately on his accession, violated the peace, and proceeded in person against the Greek forces which were quartered near Midspin (Nisibis), and gave the army in Aderbichan, orders to invade our country. They accordingly came, committed divers excesses, and encamped near the city of Idols (i. e. Pakuan in the province of Ararat)."

Yezdejird II. surnamed *Sipahdost* (the soldier's friend), was the son and successor of Baharam V. (not II.) surnamed *Gour* (the



wild-ass), who had entered into a truce with the Roman emperor, Theodosius II., for *one hundred years*. The father of Baharam V. was the Yezdejird I., to whom, according to the singular story told by Procopius, the Emperor Arcadius, on his death-bed, committed the guardianship of his infant son Theodosius; a trust which the Sassanian monarch is stated to have accepted and discharged with unexampled fidelity; and “the infancy of Theodosius was protected by the arms and councils of Persia.” There is strong reason to conclude, not only from this circumstance, but also from the abuse lavished on Yezdejird by the oriental writers, the surname given to him in the Persian annals, of *Ulathim*, or the sinner, and his recorded indulgence towards the Christians, that he had embraced the Christian faith, or was at least favourable towards it. During the reign of the light-hearted and chivalrous Baharam Gour, the *Cœur de Lion* of Persian history, the magian priesthood appear to have regained their political ascendancy. Gibbon, indeed, states, that, in the last year of Yezdejird, the magi excited a cruel persecution against the Christians, on the pretence that a bishop, named Abdas, had destroyed one of the fire-temples of Susa. But it is far more probable, that these disorders broke out on the death of their protector, when, it is known, some confusion ensued, since it was not without a struggle that Baharam obtained the crown. Some Christian fugitives who escaped to the Roman frontier, were sternly demanded by the Persian monarch; but the Emperor Theodosius, at the instigation of the patriarch Atticus, refused to surrender them. Hence ensued the short and inglorious war which was terminated by the above-mentioned truce for a hundred years. “Although,” says Gibbon, “the revolutions of Armenia might threaten the public tranquillity, the essential conditions of this treaty were respected near fourscore years by the successors of Constantine and Artaxerxes.” How they were respected, will be seen hereafter. When, a second time, the Persian government, to which Yezdejird II. had succeeded, demanded some Christian fugitives, Theodosius, according to Elisæus, complied with the demand; but of this, remarks Mr. Neumann, not the slightest mention is made by any Byzantine writer, sacred or profane; and he infers that their silence must have been wilful. Elisæus thus commences his history.

“Although we have but little satisfaction in deploring the misfortunes of our country, yet, at the command of your Eminence,



we will begin where it is fit to begin. Truly, not of our own free will do we describe, in lamenting tones, all the miseries of which we ourselves have been eye-witnesses.

“After the fall of the Arsacides, the family of Sassan, the Persian, ruled over the land of the Armenians. They ruled their kingdom according to the doctrines of the magi, and inflicted much oppression on all who lived not conformably to that belief. This oppression commenced under King Arshag (Arsaces, who reigned from 363 to 381), the son of Diran, and grandson of Dertad (Teridates), and thenceforward there was continual strife, till the sixth year of King Artash (Artaces), the son of Sdahrashapuh.\* On the deposition of this sovereign, the government fell into the hands of the Armenian princes; and whenever the hordes of the Persian king made inroads on the country, the knightly band of the Armenians assembled under their leaders, and hastened to give the invaders battle, for the fear of God was great and firmly established in the land of the Armenians. This state of things continued from the accession of the king of kings, Shapu, till the second year of the king of kings, Yasgerd, the son of Varram. Yasgerd belonged to the accomplices of Satan; he sent forth his accumulated venom, and offered it as a useful and deceptive remedy. And the horn of iniquity began to sound, and the mighty cloud of dust spread over all the four quarters of the earth. The hater and adversary of all believers in Christ appeared; he persecuted and tortured the Christians, and took from them their guiltless lives; for his delight was in desolation and bloodshed, wherefore he constantly thought how he might fully vent the bitterness of his venom, and whither he might shoot the multitude of his arrows. With immoderate fury he fell, like a wild beast, on the country of the Greeks, pressed on as far as the city of Midspin, laid waste sundry provinces of the Romans, and after pulling down the churches, dragged the booty and prisoners after him, filling all the troops in the land with fear and trembling.

“Now the excellent Emperor Theodosius (the younger) being a great lover of peace in Christ, would not give battle to the enemy, but sent his general for the East, Anatolius by name, to meet him, with much treasure. Those Persians who, by reason of their

\* This must be Artashir, or Artaces the last, as he is styled in Avdall's History, “the son of Viramshapuh,” who was deposed by the Persian king, A. D. 428; and on his death, a few years afterwards, the race of the Armenian Arsacidæ became extinct.





Christian belief, had fled and found refuge in the imperial city, where they were assembled and delivered into the hands of the king; and all things by him required, were acceded to. By this submission he was prevailed upon to stay his further progress, and to return to his city Dispon (Ctesiphon on the Tigris, opposite to Seleucia). As fire increases by the addition of fuel, so began the unbelieving prince to meditate something further, when he saw that his iniquity was successful. Knowing now that he was secure, and that all danger of opposition was removed, he proceeded to turn all from the holy faith; some with mere threats, others with dungeons and chains. If any one died under persecution, he seized on his property, personal and real, and acted in all things with the grossest injustice. He suspended misery over the whole land. He called his officers of state together, in council; and all those who were attached to idolatry by indissoluble bonds, burned like a flaming furnace against the belief of the holy church.\*”

The learned chronicler proceeds to narrate the advice given to the Persian king by his magian counsellors, to undertake an expedition against the Kushanians, by whom we are to understand the Hunnish or Scythic tribes dwelling within the Caspian gates. He accordingly issued a proclamation summoning all his vassals to take the field; which, we are told, was obediently complied with by all his Christian subjects, although many of the provinces into which the proclamation was sent, had not been heretofore accustomed to furnish their contingent in these expeditions. The king, elated with the powerful muster, took the field against the Huns, but “was unable, in a space of two years, to bring them to an engagement, or to subdue them.” These expeditions, renewed every season, began in the fourth, and continued till the eleventh year of his reign. At length, “when the king saw that the Romans remained true to the treaty which they had concluded with him, and that peace reigned through all his dominions, he sent the joyful tidings to all the fire-temples in his kingdom: he brought fat oxen and long-haired animals in numbers to the holy fire, as a burnt offering, and was besides incessantly employed in performing his impure idolatry. He honoured the magi, more particularly the *mogbeds*, with crowns and other marks of distinction. He then issued an order for depriving the Christians of the goods and property which they possessed in Persia.”

\* Hist. of Vartan, pp. 3, 4.

In the second chapter, Elisæus proceeds to describe the courageous steadfastness of the Christians who were in the army, notwithstanding the unintermitting efforts made to seduce or terrify them into apostasy. Up to the close of the eleventh year of his reign, King Yezdejird is represented as having adopted a mild and hypocritical policy. The magi, however, were continually instigating him to banish heresy from all his dominions, and to enforce the observances of the faith of Zoroaster as the ruling one. The Christians in the army were deprived of their pay, sent to the worst places for winter quarters, and harassed in all sorts of ways; while the population of Armenia were subjected to heavy imposts, even the hermits and monks being subjected to a poll-tax; a Persian governor was set over the province, and a *mogbed* was made judge. "Notwithstanding that all these transactions were very hard, and the exactions extremely oppressive, yet no one opposed him on that account, so long as nothing was openly undertaken against the church. When, according to law, a hundred might be taken, double that sum was extorted from the priests, and threefold from the bishops; and this not only on edifices in good repair, but also on ruins. . . . When, however, it was seen that all this could not depress the population, the priests and high-priests of Zoroaster publicly prepared an order, and put forth a proclamation concerning their iniquitous religion."

This proclamation, which the historian gives at length, is an extremely curious document, setting forth the magian creed, and charging the Christians with holding various absurd heresies, among which, the monkish vows of poverty and celibacy are alluded to as a heinous sin. It is satisfactory to find nothing worse alleged against "the Nadsaræans," than that they "praised poverty more than wealth; praised misfortune, and despised fortune; scoffed at fate, and made a jest of fame; loved plainness of apparel; praised death, and despised life." The proclamation was issued in the name of "Mihnersch (Meher Narsi), Grand Vizier of Iran and Dan-iran,"\* to whose wise administration, Sir John Malcolm tells us, Baharam Gour and his successor were greatly indebted for the prosperity of their reigns. The Persian vizier appears, in fact, for

\* Dan-iran or Aniran, according to the learned Translator, denotes that which was *not* Iran or Persia. But, in the answer to this proclamation, Mihnersch is styled "Grand Vizier of the Arians and Anarians." In a previous proclamation (p. 5) we read, "To all people of my kingdom, Arians and non-Arians." Is this a mistake for Iranians and non-Iranians? Or has Mr. Neumann confounded Iran with Aria, the ancient name of a central region of Persia?





several reigns, to have acquired an influence which greatly circumscribed the royal prerogative, and sometimes overawed the throne. To this crafty minister, acting under the influence of the *mogbeds*, the persecution of the Christians appears to have been chiefly attributable. In his proclamation, high *jure divino* ground is taken in the following terms: "But be mindful, that whatsoever faith your sovereign holds, the same must you also receive; especially for this reason, that we have to render an account of you to God." Upon this same ground, the Translator says in a note, "Gustasp required that all princes dependant on Iran should adopt the doctrine of Zoroaster; and this was the cause of the many religious wars in the Persian kingdom." Such has been the fundamental principle of all ecclesiastical establishments, Pagan or Christian, Popish or Protestant. Mihrnerseh, Trajan, Aurungzebe, Henry VIII. and his daughters, Philip II., and Louis XIV., all held the same article of royal faith; that whatsoever be the creed of the sovereign, the same are his subjects bound to receive. All persecuted too, with similar piety, the rebellious faith that would not conform to the royal edict.

On the receipt of this proclamation, a council of all the bishops, sub-bishops (*chorepiscopi*), and priests, was held in the royal city of Ardashad (Artaxata); and an answer was drawn up in the name of Joseph, bishop of Ararat, and his brethren, which is also given at length.\*

On the receipt of this letter, the Persian monarch was inflamed with great rage, and immediately summoned to his court the most distinguished of the Armenian princes, among whom was Vartan, the head of the house of the Mamigonians, and the hero of the subsequent narrative. On their arrival, the tyrant swore by the

\* This highly remarkable epistle is dated in the year 450. In the original, it is so exceedingly difficult, that the learned Translator has been able only to guess at the meaning of some parts, after bestowing upon them the most intense application. Some of the expressions are equivocal; others extremely obscure. The deity of Christ is clearly asserted, but not so clearly the personal distinction between the Father and the Word; yet, some expressions excepted, the confession is not far from orthodox. The opening paragraph states an interesting historical fact, which, Mr. Neumann remarks, is entirely new to western history, and he has in vain sought for more precise information on the subject. "As regards the epistle sent by thee into our country, we call to mind, that, in former times, one of the Mogbeds, who was very learned in your doctrine, and whom you held to be something more than man, did believe in the God of life, the Creator of heaven and earth, and that he disproved and annihilated every position of your doctrine. It being found that nothing could be done against him by reasoning, he was stoned by King Vormist (probably Hoormuz or Hormisdas II., who came to the throne A. D. 302). Shouldst thou be now really wishful to know our principles, his books are to be found in all parts of your country; read, and learn from them."



sun, that if, on the morrow, they did not worship the object of the magian idolatry, he would inflict the most cruel vengeance upon them, their families, and their country. The princes, Bishop Elisæus tells us, thought of nothing but of offering themselves up in martyrdom, with the meekness of Isaac when bound on the holy altar. But, alas! their better purpose was over-ruled by the advice of "one of the privy counsellors of the king, who had in secret an inward love of Christ," (Father Michael calls him one of the eunuchs of the king, who was a Christian, though obliged to conceal his faith,) and who counselled the Armenians, for the sake of their country, to dissemble also, and profess conformity to the king's wishes. Yesdejird, delighted with his supposed triumph over their resolution, sent them home, loaded with honours and dignities; and shortly afterwards sent a large army, attended by more than 700 teachers, to accomplish the conversion not only of the Armenian Christians, but also of the "Georgians, Albanians, Liphnians\*, Akhznians†, Kortusians‡, Dsotians, Tasanians§, and all those who were secretly Christians in the dominions of Persia." Before the expiration of six months, all the churches of Christian worship were to be pulled down, the books seized, the priests forbidden to teach, and the monasteries broken up; and all the rites of magianism were to be punctually enforced.

The effect of this dire intelligence on the minds of the Armenians, was only to excite indignation and astonishment at the pusillanimity or apostacy of their princes, as well as of those priests who had also affected to embrace the royal creed. Their bishops, in the mean time, were not inactive, but secretly organized an armed insurrection against their oppressors. The first attempt to close the doors of a church, on the part of a mogbed at the head of an armed force, was successfully resisted on the spot, by the priest of the village. This occurred at a place called Ankes (Anghel or Anglon), in the province of Ararat. The mogbed, alarmed at the unexpected resistance, counselled the Armenian margrave, Vasag the Siunian, to write to the king to retract his commands. His arguments, however, were lost upon the traitorous apostate,

\* Or Liphnians, a Caucasian tribe inhabiting a district east of the Koor, and supposed to be the *Zubieni* of Pliny.

† "Akhznik is the third Armenian province, and to the south borders on Mesopotamia." Osrhoene?

‡ Or Kortusians, *i. e.* Carduchi or Koords.

§ The Dsotians or Dsofteazians inhabited the banks of the Koor, to the west of the Albanians. The Tasnians are supposed to be a foreign tribe inhabiting the canton of Duroperan.



who had “with his whole heart gone over to the Persian creed, and who now, with a view to secure the royal favour, zealously began to try every means of bribery and intimidation to gain over proselytes. His impious excesses at length induced the holy bishops to take decisive measures. At their instigation, the people flew to arms, attacked and defeated the Persian troops, and took the margrave himself prisoner. But, upon his penitently imploring forgiveness, the bishops, though suspicious of his hypocrisy, are stated to have “used no violence towards him.” The people then “fell upon the strong-holds which the Persians had every where in the land, and drove out and destroyed those who dwelt therein.” “They destroyed the places; and carried away the men and women, together with their property and possessions, treasures and riches, into captivity. They pulled down and laid waste their dwellings, and burned their houses of idolatry,—the houses for the worship of fire; they removed the horrors of false worship; and taking the utensils away from the fire-temples, they placed them in the holy churches, where they were consecrated by the priests to be ornaments to the altar of the Lord. Instead of the idolatry which had been performed in all the heathenish places, they now set up the cross of Christ the Redeemer; they purified all the holy altars, established holy and life-giving principles, and appointed priests and curates; and all in the land gave themselves up to steadfast hope.”\*

One of the chief nobles was now despatched to the Emperor Theodosius, to implore his succour and protection. But, unhappily, shortly after the arrival of the Armenian envoys, on the 28th of July, 450, he expired in consequence of a fall from his horse; and his successor, Marcian, was too zealously attached to the orthodox creed as established by the council of Chalcedon, to lend his assistance to the schismatics of Armenia. Guided by the counsels of two evil-minded ministers, the patrician Anatolius, and the Syrian Elpharios, he would hear nothing of the “holy league,” but sent Elpharios as ambassador to the sovereign of Persia, with whom he concluded a close alliance, promising to withdraw all succours from the Armenian insurgents. Although now deprived of all hope of foreign assistance, the Christian patriots were not cast down, but, encouraged by their bishops, flocked to the standard raised in defence of their religion. The whole body was

\* Hist. of Vartan, p. 34.



formed into three divisions: one was appointed to guard the frontier towards Ajerbijan; the second and main body, under Vartan, as generalissimo, was to march against the Persian force on the Albanian border; while a third division was entrusted to the treacherous prince of Sünik. This fatuitous confidence in Vasag, if indeed any trust was reposed in him, led to the consequences that might have been anticipated. He opened a secret correspondence with the enemy; and, guided by his information respecting the designs of his countrymen, the whole Persian force was directed against the division under the brave Vartan. The armies met near the boundaries of Georgia; and notwithstanding the disproportion of numbers, the Christians are represented as having obtained a complete victory, which they followed up by clearing Albania of the enemy, putting to the sword all the magi found in the strong places. Vasag, who had in the mean time thrown off the mask, and begun to ravage the country, on hearing of Vartan's triumphant return, fled, and shut himself up in winter quarters, where he was reduced to great extremities. Still, by means of some apostate priests whom he employed as emissaries, he was enabled to carry on his machinations, and to succeed in detaching numbers from the holy leagues. The Persian monarch, finding himself so much deceived as to the strength and constancy of his Christian subjects, had issued a proclamation of indemnity and free toleration. But when he now ascertained that the Romans had entirely withdrawn their help, he resumed his cruel purpose; and swore by an inviolable oath, to rid himself of the heresy by a great battle. Raising a powerful army, he took the field in person, and encamped near the city Phaidagaran, on the Albanian border.

Undismayed by the doubtful state of his native land, the great and valorous Vartan, assisted by the unanimous concurrence of the princes who had not fallen away from the holy league, took the field at the head of the patriot forces in the plain of Artass (Artaxata?) to the number of 66,000 men, horse and foot. "With them," says Elisæus, "came St. Joseph (the patriarch), the priest Leont, many other priests, and a crowd of deacons; for these feared not to take part with their brethren in battle. Not, indeed, that they deemed earthly strife to be suited to them, but they wished to be present for the spiritual encouragement of the valiant troops prepared for death." The apology here offered for the Armenian priests who took up arms, shews that the Historian had





somewhat more enlightened ideas on the subject than became prevalent in later times. A successful assault was made on the Persian camp; but this was speedily followed by a second and more terrible conflict, in which there was "great wrath and vast slaughter on both sides." On the side of the Christians there fell 1036; on the side of the unbelievers, 3544. But the brave Vartan was found worthy of martyrdom. This fatal battle was fought June 2, 451; and the reflections of the venerable Historian are very touching. "It was then spring time, and the blooming meadows were destroyed by the crowd. The heart must bleed at the sight of the heaps of corpses; and in lamentation must the beholder necessarily break forth when hearing the wail of the wounded, the last moan of the dying, the fall of the overtaken, the flight of the coward, the concealment of the fugitives, the fear of unmanly men, the screams of women, the mourning of children and little ones, the sorrow of relatives, the weeping of women and friends—he who saw and heard all this, could not refrain from lamentation. There was no distinction, whether of the victors or the vanquished; wherever the brave of both sides met, there were victims. Now when the leader of the Armenians had fallen in the battle, there was no longer any head round which the fugitive host of the survivors could assemble; for the number of those who fled, was greater than that of those who fell. They were scattered, and threw themselves into the strong-holds of the country, and ruled all the districts and fortresses which could not be taken."\*

The remains of the army shut themselves up in a fortress, where they were besieged by the Persians. At length, reduced to extremities through want of provisions, a brave warrior, at the head of 700 men, sallied out by night, and all effected their escape. Those who remained were obliged to surrender at discretion, of whom 213 were put to death; but "the blessed Joseph and Leont" were only scourged and put under guard, while the other priests were sent to their homes. A proclamation was now issued, directing the inhabitants to return to the peaceful cultivation of the country, with the assurance of protection. The Christians, however, distrusted the treacherous announcement, and refused to submit to the sway of the impious Vasag. "Hereupon," says the Historian, "they quitted their homes, their cities and boroughs; the bride left her couch, and the bridegroom his chamber; the old

\* Hist. of Vartan, pp. 56, 57.

abandoned their chairs, and the infants their mothers' breasts; the youths and maidens, and all the men and women arose and fled to inaccessible fastnesses, and to impregnable places among the mountains. To them, a life led like that of the wild beasts in caves, with the fear of God, seemed better than comfort in their dwellings if purchased by apostacy. Without murmuring they lived upon herbs, and forgot their accustomed flesh-meals; the caves they considered like the chambers of their lofty dwellings, and the subterranean abodes like their ornamented halls. The songs which they sang were psalms, and they read the Sacred Scriptures with perfect joy. Each was to himself a church; each was to himself a priest; their bodies served them for the holy altar, and their souls were the offering. No one mourned despairingly for those executed by the sword, nor were any greatly troubled for their nearest friends. With peace of soul they suffered the loss of all their goods, and it never occurred to their recollection, that they had once possessed them. Patiently they endured all fatigues, and met every attack with great valour, although they looked forward to no joyful hope, and had no means of accomplishing any great feat of arms; for the greater number of their most distinguished princes, their brothers, sons, and daughters, with many of their friends, were scattered in various places of security. Some were in the gloomy land of the Chaldeans, many others in the southern provinces, in the unapproachable fastnesses of the Dmorian; a part were in the dense forests of Ardsakh, while others lived in the central parts of the country, in various mountain-castles. All bore their sufferings with much patience, fixing their hopes on God, and only imploring of him that he might not suffer them to witness the fall of the Holy Church.\*

A partizan warfare appears now to have been successfully maintained by the scattered forces of the Christians; and, in alliance with the Huns, a formidable inroad was made into the Persian territories. The king, exceedingly troubled at these proceedings, at length, by advice of his vizier, Mihrnerseh, summoned Vasag to appear before him, together with the Armenian patriarch, several of the priests and bishops who had been thrown into prison, and the principal Christian chiefs. The Apostate, unaware, as it should seem, like Haman when invited by Ahasuerus, of the reverse that awaited him, appeared in all his splendid insignia. But proofs of

\* Hist. of Vartan, pp. 60, 61.





the capital, and acknowledging as little allegiance, hardly aught but their own inclinations and power, in the treatment of their subjects and their neighbours. Thus left to themselves, the Armenian kings were not strong enough either to put down internal rebellion, or to repel foreign aggression. Many of the southern nobles became Mohammedans; and we soon cease to hear of the south-eastern provinces as a part of Armenia. Kookárk and Oodi, the northern provinces, owned but a reluctant allegiance, and were the scene of protracted and bloody wars. In fact, a branch of the Pakradians assumed in Kookárk the title of king, A.D. 982; and we hear of their descendants occasionally as late as A.D. 1260.\* The Ardzroonies, whose Assyrian origin has been already mentioned, yielded to the Pakradians, from the beginning, but a turbulent obedience; and, in A.D. 908, Kakíg, their head, received from a neighbouring vizeer the crown of Vasbooragán, thus completing their independence, and severing from Armenia one of its largest provinces. This petty Armenian kingdom, which had for its capital the city of Van, struggled for an unenvied existence till A.D. 1021; when Senekerim, its king, alarmed at the first invasion of the Seljookians, transferred his territory, by a regular exchange of deeds, to the Emperor Basilius, and received in return the province of Sebastia, whither he migrated with his army and about one-third of his subjects. In A.D. 961, a branch separated from the original stock of the Pakradians, and peaceably established the kingdom of Kars; which continued to exist even after the parent throne was overturned.

The worst foreign enemy of the Pakradians was the vizeer of Aderbaiján. He repeatedly ravaged the country, drove the king from his throne to retired mountain fastnesses, and subjected the people to the horrors of war and of religious persecution. The Abkház (Abasgi), too, made frequent incursions upon the northern frontier. But all the neighbouring enemies of Armenia were at length crushed by another power, which trampled alike upon it and upon them. Central Asia, that ocean of nomadic hordes whose waves had often, from the remotest antiquity, burst across the Jihón (Oxus) to deluge the plains of Persia, and in the sixth century had even extended, in the persons of the Huns, its desolating influences to Armenia, now sent forth a vast inundation which undermined successively the walls of Bagdád and of Constantinople,

\* St. Martin, vol. i. pp. 365, 422.





and spread over Armenia the foreign race that oppresses and oppresses it at the present day. We have just seen one of the petty Armenian kingdoms take to flight at the approach of Tóghrul-beg at the head of his Turks.\* The very next year, the representative of the main branch of the Pakradians, affrighted by the same enemy, bequeathed to the Greek emperor his capital and his kingdom, upon condition of being defended during life from foreign invasion. The Greeks succeeded by sword and by treachery in executing this testament A.D. 1046; and the family, who pretended to a direct descent from King David of Jerusalem, saw themselves transferred from the throne of Armenia, where they had enjoyed the pompous title of *Shahanshah* (king of kings), to the proprietorship of a few obscure towns in Cappadocia.

We hear much of the Church during the dark ages which we have just reviewed, but little that is grateful to the evangelical Christian. As evidence of her prosperity, we are told of numerous churches and convents built, of new ceremonies and precious relics introduced, of multitudes of legendary and scholastic books composed, and of incredible miracles performed†; while disputes about the council of Chalcedon, the ambition and rivalries of Catholicoes, and the introduction of demoralizing heresy, give proof of the low state of religion. We hear nothing of eloquent preachers going through the nation and stirring it up to salutary reform; or of the establishment of schools for the education of the common people in religious knowledge and useful science. The best fruit of religion that is presented to us, is the unyielding steadfastness with which Magian and Mahomedan persecutions were endured, to the loss of property, of liberty, and often of life.

The attempts of the Seljookians met with little success until, by the changes just mentioned, Armenia, with the unimportant exception of Kars, had passed into the hands of the Greeks, whose hatred of monophysitism was such, that they saw with indifference its partizans fall before the Turkish *yataghan*. Then, with their hundreds of thousands, they carried devastation through the coun-

\* Tóghrul's nation were Turks; his family, Seljookians. Seljook, the grandfather of Tóghrul, having by his greatness provoked the jealousy of his sovereign the king of the Turks, fled to save his life, and drew after him a large portion of his nation, who thenceforward followed the fortunes of his family. Sar. Hist. of Georg. Almac. p. 267.

† Such as a dish of cooked pigeons coming to life and flying away from table, at the command of a monk who had unwittingly ordered such a forbidden dish to be cooked on a fast day; and the current of a river reversed to convince an emperor of the orthodoxy of the Armenian mode of blessing the waters at Christmas!



try year after year, and, in A.D. 1049, sacked Ardzen, a city near the modern Erzroom, massacring 140,000 of its inhabitants, carrying as many into captivity, and levelling its 800 churches with the ground.\* Toghral died A.D. 1063, but the *falcon* was followed by the *conquering lion*.† Alp-arslán, his successor, in completing the conquest and ruin of Armenia, took and pillaged Ani, the capital of the Pakradian kings, with such slaughter, that its streets were blocked up with the bodies, and the river Akhooreán was reddened with the blood of the slain.‡ The king of Kars, thinking his city no longer safe, now followed the example of the kings of Ani and of Van, and exchanged his kingdom, A.D. 1064, with the Emperor for a small territory in the southern part of Pontus, embracing Amasia and Comana. From this conquest of Armenia by the Turks, which was thus completed, it ceased to have an individual existence. Its ancient provincial divisions were obliterated, and Armenian names of places were gradually supplanted by others of Turkish origin. The sons of Seljook, when sultáns of a vast empire, retained the wandering habits of their ancestor, who pitched his shepherd's tent upon the banks of the Jihón. Instead of imposing upon Armenia a regular government, they alternately over-ran it with their devastating hordes, and left it a prey to desolation and anarchy, until, by the death of Malek-shah, it was given up to the undivided influence of the latter of these curses.

It would be useless to attempt to thread the labyrinth of the petty, undefined, and often hostile principalities, into which Armenia was divided, between the breaking up of the empire of the house of Seljook, and the invasion of the Moghúls. The southern provinces, occupying the defiles of Mount Taurus, were divided between two branches of the family of the Türkmán, Artuk, and the relatives of the Kourid, Suláh-el-deen, so renowned in the history of the crusades under the name of Saladin. The slave of a Seljookian prince, assuming the title of Shah Armen, established and transmitted to his posterity a kingdom, having for its capital Khelát on the western shore of the lake of Van. Ani had been given by Alp-arslán to a family of Kourds; but, after an obstinate struggle, they were dispossessed by the kings of Georgia, who, now at the height of their power, not only extended their sway

\* St. Mart. vol. ii. p. 201.

† *Toghral* signifies in Turkish a falcon, and *Alp-arslán* (properly pronounced *Elb-arslán*), signifies a heroic or strong lion.

‡ St. Mart. vol. 2, p. 224.





over the northern provinces of Armenia, but infringed upon the territories of the kings of Khelát and the Atabegs of Ajerbiján.

Although Armenian rule in Armenia itself had thus ceased, in the adjoining province of Cilicia, we still find a small body of the nation governed by its own kings. During the rule of the Pakradians, and of the governors who preceded them, in fact from A.D. 597, the Greek emperors had made repeated attempts, by proclamations, by councils, and, in that part of Armenia which belonged to them, by direct force, to bring the Armenians to a union with the Greek church. But their efforts, notwithstanding some partial success at times, produced no better ultimate result than irritated obstinacy on the part of the Armenians, and overbearing contempt on that of the Greeks. After the three Armenian kings with so many of their subjects, by retiring within the Greek limits, had voluntarily put themselves in the power of the emperor, the same attempts were repeated in a still more objectionable form. At last Kakig, the exiled king of Ani, provoked beyond endurance by the contempt which the Greek bishop of Cesarea had thrown upon his nation by calling his dog *Armen* (Armenian), cruelly murdered that prelate, by tying him and his dog in a bag together, and provoking the poor animal to tear his master to pieces. He was himself slain in consequence; but Roopen, his companion and relative, avenged his death by establishing, A.D. 1080, an independent kingdom in Cilician Taurus, which for 295 years was governed by his descendants. Already were those mountainous regions occupied by a numerous Armenian population; but the standard of the Roopenians drew away still greater numbers from the cruelties of the Turks and the persecutions of the Greeks. This kingdom increased from small beginnings, till it occupied the whole country from the summits of Taurus to the sea, and from the Euphrates to the western limits of Cilicia. Ain-zarbah, Tarsus, and Sis, were successively its capitals. The power of the Greeks, from whom it endured occasional wars and constant enmity, at length fell before the lance of the crusaders. But the previous capture of Nice by the same military adventurers, and the consequent transfer of the court of the Seljookian sultáns of Room to Iconium, had already planted upon the very borders of Cilicia a still more persevering and harassing enemy. The Crusaders themselves influenced the fortune of the Roopenian kings by intrigue and intermarriages more than either

\* St. Mart. vol. I, p. 42, 377—383.





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by open war or by confirmed friendship.\* The Moghuls were their least injurious neighbours. When their hordes had already swept over Persia, Georgia, and Armenia, had advanced into Mesopotamia, and had conquered the Sultán of Iconium, the Armenian king was so fortunate as to arrest their march by a timely submission, and obtain a treaty of friendship and alliance, which the descendants of Chingiz never failed to respect, till their conversion to Mohammedanism weakened their fidelity to Christian allies. But this intimacy with the great Moghúl provoked the jealousy of the successors of Saladin; and for nearly a century, the sultáns of Egypt†, occasionally aided by the Turks of Iconium, made incursions into Cilicia, destroying its cities, and carrying its inhabitants into captivity; until, alarmed lest sympathy for the Armenians should bring upon them another crusade from Europe, they, with barbarities not to be described, put a final termination to Armenian royalty, A.D. 1375, and made Cilicia a province of Egypt.‡

While Armenia Proper was under a distinct government, whether royal or provincial, its spiritual and civil capitals were generally the same, and the incumbent of the see of St. Gregory was rarely troubled with a rival. The Turks, at the same time that they destroyed its civil government, caused the Catholicos, as early as A.D. 1060, to take refuge in Mount Taurus. He subsequently resided in some one of the numerous convents of the Black Mountain (Mount Amanus) to the west of Samosata, until A.D. 1125; when, the office of Catholicos and a small principality in Fourth Armenia becoming united in the same person, the castle of Dzovk was made the capital of both. The principality, however, being at length ruined by the Turks, the seat of the Catholicos was transferred, A.D. 1147, to Hrómkla, a fortress on the west bank of the Euphrates below Samosata, where it continued till A.D. 1294. That place having been destroyed by the Egyptians, it was removed to Sis, then the capital of the Roopenian kings. During this dis-

\* The Armenians so often mentioned in the history of the Crusades were of this Cilician kingdom.

† The sultáns of Egypt of this dynasty are called Ayoobites from Ayoob the father of Saladin (Vit. Sal. p. 1). A family of poor Emeers in Mount Lebanon still seem to lay claim to descent, through them, from the great antagonist of Richard the lion-hearted, and are known as Emeers of the house of Ayoob.

‡ Leon VI., the last Armenian king of Cilicia, was taken prisoner by the Mamlooks in 1375, and, after a long captivity, obtained his release (in 1382) through the generous interference of King John I. of Carlisle. He was not, however, permitted to return to his own country, but wandered through Europe till his death, which took place at Paris, Nov. 19, 1393. He was buried in the monastery of the Celestines.

turbed state of the nation, a number of bishops in different places assumed the dignity of Catholicos; but only one succeeded in creating a permanent division in the church. A convent in Aghtamár, an island in the lake of Van, had acquired some celebrity by having been the residence of the Catholicos for several years in the days of the Pakradians; and now that the successors of St. Gregory had fixed themselves at such a distance as the mountains of Cilicia, its bishop, A.D. 1114, boldly threw off their supremacy, and, supported by five other prelates, assumed the title and functions of Catholicos. The excommunication which was immediately denounced against him, was removed after 180 years; and the Catholicos of Aghtamár continues to exercise his functions at the present day, in full communion with the other branches of the Armenian church. During the reign of the Roopenians, the convents of the Black Mountain produced many writers, who took a high rank in the monastic literature of Armenia.

We must now return to Armenia Proper, and review the events which it in the mean time underwent. The first effect of the advance of the Moghúls, under Chingiz-khan, from their distant region north of the wall of China, was to force westward the different hordes of Turks, which, after accompanying Tóghrul across the Jihón, had fixed themselves in the eastern part of Persia. Led by Jelál-el-deen, son of the last king of Khaurism, they spread over Armenia in their march, A.D. 1226, subjecting its inhabitants to the evils of war, and of religious persecution.\* The Moghúl generals who followed, were cruel as conquerors, and oppressive as governors. Their extortions were diminished by a visit of the Armenian king of Cilicia to their distant masters; and a temporary tranquility was restored to Armenia by the personal presence of Hoolakoo, who, A.D. 1256, as the lieutenant of his brother, then the occupant of the throne of Chingiz, transferred the Moghúl head-quarters from the desert of Mooghán to the beautiful city of Marágha in Ajerbiján, and changed the encampment of a nomadic horde into a philosophic and civilized court. The tolerant spirit of the first Moghúls, or rather their partiality to the Christian re-

\* It was in the train of Jelál-el-deen that the horde from which the Osmanlies sprang, migrated from Meru-Shah-Jihán, in Khorasán, to Asia Minor. Their chief, Soleimán, dying when they had advanced as far as Erzengán, his son Erdogrud conducted them into Bithynia, where he was presented with a small district, by the Seljookian sultán of Iconium. Othmán, his son, conquered Broosa, and laid the foundation of the empire and the dynasty, which have to this day retained from him the name of Ottoman or Osmanly. Mininsky Lex. Com. § 10. Mod. Trav. Syr. and As. Min. vol. ii, p. 328. Id. Turkey, p. 12.





ligion, was but partially destroyed even after the successors of Hoolakoo embraced the Mohammedan faith; and we read of but temporary and limited persecutions, even to the last days of their reign.\*

Timoor (Tamerlane), the greatest of earthly conquerors, about A.D. 1390, swept away the miserable relics of the house of Chingiz, and repeatedly traced his bloody track across the mountains of Armenia. But he left behind him no efficient rulers, and Türkman tribes soon effaced the footsteps of the last of the Moghúls.† Hordes of Turks bearing the particular name of Türkman, originally followed Toghrol to the south of Armenia; they received accessions from the companions of Jelál-el-deen; and now, divided into the two tribes of *Ak-koyunly* (white sheep) and *Kara-koyunly* (black sheep), with Diarbekir and Van for their respective capitals, they ruled over, or rather overran, the whole of Armenia. But the Osmanlies of Constantinople on one side, and the Sofies of Persia on the other, stripped them of their power about the beginning of the sixteenth century‡; and they now lead a nomadic life in Cilicia and the adjacent countries.§

The Turks and the Persians for a long time shared the whole of Armenia between them; and it would be a painful task to trace out, through the barbarous wars of such bitter political and religious rivals, and under the grinding oppression of such tyrannical governments, the successive steps of its degradation. Shah Abbas the Great, (one of the most unfeeling devastators that Armenia, whose acquaintance with tyrants has not been small, has ever known,) that he might defend his borders against the Turks, coolly determined to draw through Armenia a broad intrenchment of perfect desert. Its unoffending inhabitants, after seeing their houses and every vestige of cultivation and of home disappear, were collected in the plain of Ararat, and driven like so many cattle to Persia, husbands and wives, parents and children separated, multitudes drowned in the Aras, others subjected to the cruelty and lust of the soldiery, and all under the very eye and influence of the

\* Chingiz and his successors have been exceeded by few in cruelty as conquerors; but as rulers, they seem to have granted toleration to every sect, and protection to the citizens of every nation. During their reign, the whole of the vast region between the Mediterranean and the Chinese Sea, was thrown open to the unrestricted investigation of travellers. It gives one a sublime idea of their power and their mildness, to see the Polos passing this distance in safety, protected simply by the passport of a sovereign on the throne of China.

† Malcolm's Hist. of Persia, vol. i. p. 316. Hist. of Persia in the Modern Traveller, Pers. vol. i. p. 160.

‡ Malcolm's Hist. Persia, vol. i. p. 320.

§ Niebuhr, Voy. en Arab. vol. ii. p. 336.



monarch.\* A part of them were indeed located with peculiar privileges at Joolfah, a suburb of Isfahán; but could this compensate to the nation for having their country converted into a desert? Or can humanity consider it as an equivalent for another colony of fifty thousand, carried in the same violent manner to a province (Mazanderan), where an unhealthy climate soon swept off every soul.†

Some changes occurred in the church, after the destruction of the Cilician kingdom, which deserve to be noticed. The Catholicos at Sis, although deprived of the support of an Armenian king and court, maintained his spiritual rule over the nation until A. D. 1441, when an assembly of seven hundred of the clergy placed another in Echmiádzin, the possession of a hand of St. Gregory being supposed to give that convent superior claims. The successors of the latter have ever since been regarded as the first in rank; but the Catholicos of Sis still governs a small branch of the Armenian church, in full communion with the rest, according to a treaty of peace and amity signed by the incumbents of the two sees A. D. 1651. Mohammed II., after taking Constantinople A. D. 1453, induced many Armenians to settle in that capital, and removing the Armenian bishop of Broosa thither, gave him authority over all the Armenians in his dominions, with the title of patriarch. The patriarchate of Jerusalem, which originated as early as 1311, owed its commencement much in the same way to the Sultán of Egypt, to whom that city was then subject. As neither of these patriarchs, with the exception of that of Jerusalem for a short time, has ventured to ordain bishops, or to consecrate the *meirón* (holy oil), two duties peculiar to a Catholicos, they are considered as merely bishops clothed with authority, and spiritual dependents, rather than rivals, of the head of the church at Echmiádzin. These appointments to the office of Catholicos or of Patriarch, having ever been subject, under both the Turks and the Persians, to the approbation of the civil power, could not be other than sources of corruption; especially when that power was Mohammedan, and influenced almost solely by bribery. In fact, the remainder of the

\* Chardin, *Voyages en Perse*, ed. Langlès, vol. ii. p. 304.

† *Mod. Trav. Persia*, vol. i. p. 186. *Malcolm's Hist. Pers.* vol. i. p. 368.—Sir John Malcolm, in his valuable *History of Persia*, and others, have followed the Persian authors. If we had received our accounts of Sennacherib or Nebuchadnezzar from Assyrian or Babylonian writers, instead of Jewish, we should probably have a very different opinion of their characters. Even his admirers, however, cannot conceal that the domestic character of Abbas was stained with the most unnatural cruelty.—He is reported to have carried no less than 500,000 Georgians and Armenians captives to Persia. Chardin, vol. ii. p. 62.



ecclesiastical history of Armenia is so exclusively made up of the intrigues, and broils, and barefaced corruption of ambitious ecclesiastics, that it may as well be left untold.

The Armenians are known at the present day as a scattered race; and one cannot rise from the perusal of their history, without wondering, not that they are so, but that they should still be found in considerable numbers in their own country. We have already noticed their existence in the north of Mesopotamia, their emigration to Armenia Minor and Cilicia, their settlement in Constantinople, and their forcible removal by Shah Abbas to Persia. We are also told, that the Saracens and Greeks, while contending for their country, each took away multitudes of captives; Tóghrul and Timoor carried thousands to unknown countries; the Egyptians removed sixty thousand to Egypt; and it is known that the Persians in every war, even to the last with Russia, have always carried their captives into servitude. Multitudes, moreover, have at various periods been induced, by oppression at home, to seek voluntarily an asylum in distant countries, to say nothing of other multitudes that commerce has enticed away. We are not surprised, therefore, at finding them, not only in almost every part of Turkey and Persia, but in India, and on the islands of the Indian Archipelago, as well as in Russia, Poland, Austria, Italy, and all over the Levant. Every where they are considered as clever and shrewd merchants.

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The total number of the Armenian nation has been supposed not to exceed two millions, of whom three-fourths are computed to be under the Ottoman dominion. In Constantinople and the adjacent villages, there are computed to be 200,000 Armenians, of whom about 4000 acknowledge the supremacy of the Romish see. The Russian and Persian provinces are supposed to contain about 200,000. About 40,000 are found in Judea; in Hungary and the adjacent countries, about 10,000; and a few are scattered even over Africa and America. The present patriarch of Abyssinia is an Armenian.

It is about half a century since the Armenian provinces began to look towards Russia for succour and protection; and the rapacious encroachments of that power must be regarded as, for them, a fortunate circumstance. Since the beginning of the present century,

the fortunate wars of the Muscovite against the Shah and the Sultan have brought the greater part of the old Parthian kingdom of Armenia under the sway of the Czar; and the Christian population have hailed the brutal *Roos* as their deliverers. The tide of emigration is, in fact, setting so strong into the Russian territory, as to threaten to leave the Ottoman provinces without a Christian population. Whatever may be the ultimate political consequences of the aggrandizement of Russia at the expense of the two Mohammedan empires which are receding before her armies, the Christian politician cannot regard without satisfaction the political redemption of those countries from the blighting influence of Turkish or Persian barbarism and intolerance; while the Armenian patriot is led to rejoice in the prospect that, the time is at hand, when "a new Maccabee shall be sent to rule over the country of Ararat."\*

\* The language of Mr. Avdall, in concluding his History with an affectionate apostrophe to his mother country.



## PREFACE TO THE LETTERS.

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AN important fact, brought to light by the experience of Protestant Missions in Western Asia, has for some time interested the benevolent in the relics of the *Oriental Churches*. While papists are hedged around by inveterate prejudice, and moslem by their intolerant law against apostasy, *those churches are accessible*. The importance of evangelical labours among them, therefore, has been naturally regarded as enhanced, not only by the prospect of effecting their own improvement, but by the very inaccessibleness in other ways of the regions they inhabit. One of the largest of the oriental churches is the ARMENIAN. From what missionaries had seen of its scattered members along the coast of the Levant, the American Board of Missions had been led to hope, that in *Armenia itself* might be found some promising fields for missionary culture. To investigate this point, their Prudential Committee directed the journey narrated in the following pages to be undertaken. Their Instructions, bearing date the 19th of January, 1830, may be found published in part in the *Missionary Herald*, vol. xxvi. p. 75. They were received at Malta on the 27th of February, and the journey was accomplished during the remainder of that and the first six months of the following year.

*The manner of the journey* will be sufficiently declared by the narrative itself. One point only need be alluded to here. The reader will find occasional descriptions, perhaps sometimes disgusting ones, of circumstances of inconvenience which were often encountered. In a country where no accommodations for comfortable travelling exist, there can be only the alternative of fur-



nishing one's self, or of dispensing with them entirely. Two English friends, who will be alluded to in the course of the narrative, adopting the former course, took in their train, from Persia to Trebizond, fifteen or sixteen animals bearing tents, beds, chairs, tables, and other articles of convenience, with servants in proportion; and another, for a small family and a brother, is known to have hired no less than thirty. Had such arrangements been adopted for this journey, the reader would have been rarely told of the uncomfortable circumstances now alluded to. What was deemed a desirable regard for missionary economy, with other considerations, prevented; and the other part of the alternative was adopted. Innumerable annoyances, some expense of health, and risk of life even, were among the consequences; but there was the serious advantage, also, of a more thorough introduction to the domestic condition of the people, than would otherwise have been had. This advantage, it has been found convenient, in the course of a faithful narrative, to impart also to the reader. While enjoying it, he will have no disposition, it is hoped, to interpret any description as a gratuitous appeal to his sympathies in personal sufferings; and if in any case his taste is annoyed by a picture drawn offensively naked, it is presumed he will not complain, when he reflects what the experience of the reality must have been.


*The advantages enjoyed for conducting investigations to a true result*, will also appear in part from the narrative. It may be proper to state here, that the disposition universally prevalent to give information with little regard to truth, has been, it is believed, fully appreciated. Besides re-questioning and cross-questioning the same informant, several persons, when opportunity has offered, have often been interrogated respecting the same fact, before the truth of it was regarded as ascertained. At Shoosha, a large part of the general ground touching the Armenians was brought under the review of the Rev. Mr. Dittrich, whose studies and experience had qualified him to be an excellent informant. And in the end,



at Malta, notes were very faithfully compared with Bishop Dionysius, one of the best informed ecclesiastics of the Armenian nation, now attached to the Armenian mission press in that island. He furnished, in fact, much additional information. Through him were obtained all the extracts from works in the Armenian language. For, during the journey, only the Turkish language had been made familiar, that being understood everywhere, and a dragoman being always at hand to interpret, when it was found convenient to resort to the Armenian. A missionary might perhaps in some cases have made a better *selection* of extracts than the bishop, on the topics of inquiry proposed to him; but full reliance may be placed upon the faithfulness of his *translation* of them into Turkish. In converting them from that language into English, no pains have been spared, in the use of the best helps, to attain perfect accuracy.—After all, it would be vain to hope, that false information has not, perhaps in many cases, been credited. Should the effect of such errors be, to lead others to ascertain the truth, their occurrence will be less regretted. The reader is especially warned to regard nearly all the statistical estimates of population, as liable to great uncertainty, they being in hardly one case founded upon a regular census.

*The course taken to secure a correct record of observations*, it may be well briefly to explain. It was often found impossible, when thrown at night, exhausted from fatigue and hunger, into a dirty stable or a noisy family-room, to record more than brief memoranda of the observations of the day. With these to aid the memory, fuller journals were drawn up at the next convenient stopping-place, generally after a very few days. At the direction of the Committee, each of us kept his own memoranda of facts and opinions, and wrote out his journal independently of the other, to serve as a mutual check against errors and omissions. With hardly more than one exception, (where an important conversation happened to be carried on in a language understood by but one,) neither knew what was in the records of the other, until the final reports to the Society





were drawn up at Malta. Then also each made out a separate report from the data in his own possession. Upon the comparison at the end, it was a source of gratification to find, that though one had preserved many things which the other had not, very rarely did any serious discrepancy exist. In this state the two reports were submitted to the Committee. From them the following work was ordered by the Committee to be prepared and published. In executing their order, Mr. Dwight's report has been constantly at hand, and has been freely drawn from, whenever it was found to contain the fullest exhibition of facts and opinions; and the reader is requested to understand that Mr. Dwight has shared equally in the labour of collecting the materials for the whole. It is a matter of sincere regret, that, after contributing so much enterprise, firmness, and uniform Christian affection toward the successful and happy prosecution of the journey, his absence from his native land has forbidden the possibility of his sharing, likewise, the responsibilities of authorship in the publication of the results to which it has led.

*The form of letters* was adopted in both of the reports submitted to the Committee, for their many obvious advantages. A mere continuous journal, throwing into each day only its own events, would necessarily have occasioned much diffusiveness and repetition, and separated far from each other scraps of information needing to be joined in order to a complete view of any given subject. Letters written at the end of the journey, while they have still allowed the preservation of regular dates for such events as demanded a chronological order, have given liberty, whenever occasion introduced any topic, to complete the discussion of that topic, by throwing into one succinct view all the information that was obtained respecting it in any part of the journey. Some advantage has been reaped, at the same time, from the informality of the epistolary style of writing. In deciding to whom his letters should be directed, neither writer felt at any loss. They were addressed to the REV. RUFUS ANDERSON, one of the Secretaries of the Board. He had drawn up the Instructions which had guided the investigations

of the journey, and was already personally acquainted with the affairs of the Mediterranean; both looked to him as a proper organ of communication with the Committee, and one had already shared with him the labours and pleasures of a similar journey of missionary investigation in Greece. The reader is requested to bear in mind, that the letters were originally composed, not for popular, nor for devotional purposes, but for an official report to the executive officers of a missionary society, with special reference to their business arrangements; and if, in preparing them for the public, it has not been found easy to divest them entirely of their original character, he will, it is hoped, need no apology.

The *map* which accompanies the work has been compiled for the purpose; no single one being found already in existence that could be advantageously used. The greater part of Armenia is still *terra incognita* to the topographer; and, being divided between three great empires, and in their remotest corners, it has received less attention than some others equally little known. In laying out this map, a recent Russian map of the countries between the Black and Caspian Seas has been followed in the northern part; a map in Morier's *Journeys to Persia* has helped to settle the localities of Aderbaján; Kinneir's *Journey in Armenia and Kürdistán* has thrown light upon some very unfrequented parts; Niebuhr has been relied upon for some localities in Mesopotamia; and an Armenian map in Mukhitar's *Armenian Dictionary* has been frequently consulted, besides other more common authorities which need not be named. After all, it is to be regarded as only an approximation to an accurate delineation of the country.

Travellers from other nations have repeatedly visited the regions here described. The most important publications they have given to the world, viz., those of Chardin, Tournefort, Kinneir, Morier, Porter, and Le Gamba, have been consulted in these researches. Where their authority has been relied upon for any fact, credit has been scrupulously given, with one exception, to be mentioned in its place. The attention of *Americans* has been very little directed to



Armenia; perhaps hardly enough to create a desire for further information respecting it. For, an evil sometimes incident to a new thing, is, that it is too far from the common range of knowledge for its bearings to be fully appreciated. It is hoped that the fact, that the reader is now presented with the observations of the first Americans who have trod the soil of Armenia, will not be one that shall detract from his interest in their perusal. The work is submitted to the religious public, with the earnest prayer that it may contribute to forward the great work of benevolence to which the author and his coadjutor have devoted their lives.

*Boston, January, 1833.*

ELI SMITH.



## DIRECTIONS

FOR THE PRONUNCIATION OF FOREIGN WORDS.

THE author bespeaks the reader's patience with the *hard names* which he will encounter in persuing this work. To give an account of any country without mentioning the names of persons and places which are found in it, is evidently impossible. Such exotic names must, in *most* cases, contain some sounds or combinations of sounds not familiar to an English ear. Armenia unfortunately abounds in such as are uncouth. The difficulty, therefore, was not to be avoided. The author has met it in the best way he was able; but he can truly say, that hardly any thing in the preparation of the work has given him more trouble. Had he, in order to divest names of their barbarous aspect, brought them within the scope of ordinary English spelling, to the entire neglect of foreign sounds, no scholar would have forgiven him. He has therefore had recourse to the *native orthography*; and has been so successful as to collect a list of most of the names which occur, as they are written by Armenian, Turkish, Arabic, Persian, or other authors, to whose languages respectively they belong. It was for a time in contemplation to publish such a list in an appendix. But the number of readers who are acquainted with the Arabic and Armenian characters, is so small, that the project was abandoned.

In fixing upon the letters by which to represent particular sounds, little difficulty has been experienced in regard to *consonants*; the use of our consonant letters being sufficiently uniform to express with little ambiguity any sounds that are common to our language; and certain combinations having been pretty unanimously agreed upon to represent the more common ones which are foreign. But, in regard to *vowels*, if one would adhere closely to the *English* use of them, the difficulty is insurmountable. To comprehend its nature, let any one attempt to write a foreign word in which the two sounds of *a* in *fate* and in *father* occur, so that a stranger will pronounce it correctly.

The system adopted in this work, both for vowels and consonants, (except in some words where a vulgar spelling has gone into too general use to be corrected,) is explained, so far as explanation is needed, by the following *illustrations*. In comparing it with the native orthography, the scholar will need to be reminded that the sounds of Turkish and Persian words, especially unaccented *vowels*, are but very imperfectly represented by the Arabic characters in which those languages are written; and as much regard has been had therefore to the manner in which they are pronounced,



as to that in which they are written. The same Arabic and Armenian consonants have been pretty uniformly expressed by the same consonants in English.—In writing *ee* and *oo* instead of *é* and *ú*, the author has made a compromise with the taste of the common reader, at the expense of a loss of the uniformity which would please the scholar.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

<i>a</i>	has uniformly the sound of	<i>a</i>	in	<i>father,</i>
<i>ai</i>	” ” of	<i>i</i>	in	<i>pine,</i>
<i>ch</i>	” ” of	<i>ch</i>	in	<i>church,</i>
<i>e</i>	” ” { of	<i>a</i>	in	<i>fate,</i>
	” ” { or of	<i>e</i>	in	<i>met,</i>
<i>ee</i>	” ” of	<i>ee</i>	in	<i>feet,</i>
<i>g</i>	” ” of hard	<i>g</i>	in	<i>get,</i>
<i>gh</i>	” ” of the Arabic	<i>Ghain,</i>		
[The common reader may pronounce it like simple hard <i>g</i> .]				
<i>i</i>	” ” of	<i>i</i>	in	<i>pin,</i>
<i>j</i>	” ” of	<i>j</i>	in	<i>jar,</i>
<i>kh</i>	” ” of the Arabic	<i>Kha,</i>		
[The common reader may pronounce it like simple <i>k</i> .]				
<i>o</i>	” ” of	<i>o</i>	in	<i>note,</i>
<i>ö</i>	” ” { of the German	<i>ö</i>	in	<i>hören,</i>
	” ” { or of the French	<i>eu</i>	in	<i>beurre,</i>
<i>oo</i>	” ” of	<i>oo</i>	in	<i>cool,</i>
<i>s</i>	” ” of	<i>s</i>	in	<i>son,</i>
[Never to be pronounced like <i>z</i> .]				
<i>u</i>	” ” { of	<i>u</i>	in	<i>gulf,</i>
	” ” { or a Turkish and Armenian sound resembling it.			
<i>ü</i>	” ” { of the German	<i>ü</i>	in	<i>über,</i>
	” ” { or of the French	<i>u</i>	in	<i>vue,</i>
<i>v</i>	” ” { of the German	<i>w,</i>		
	” ” { between the English	<i>v</i> and <i>w,</i>		
<i>y</i> final	” ” of	<i>y</i>	in	<i>folly.</i>

An *accent* over a vowel indicates the *syllable* which is to be accented, without deciding whether the *vowel* itself is long or short.

## TABLE OF MONEY.\*

	Cents.
<i>Para</i> , the smallest coin of Turkey . . . . .	about $\frac{1}{6}$
<i>Piastre</i> (40 paras), the present unit in Turkish Currency . . . . .	“ $6\frac{1}{2}$
<i>Silver rouble</i> or <i>manet</i> , the Russian dollar . . . . .	“ 75
<i>Ducat</i> , a gold coin of Russia, equal to the ducat of Holland . . . . .	“ 225
<i>Abbas</i> , a silver coin of Tiflis } . . . . .	“ 15
<i>Penabad</i> , do. Shoosha } . . . . .	“ 15
<i>Shaby</i> , a Persian denomination . . . . .	“ $1\frac{1}{2}$
<i>Sahib-koran</i> , a Persian silver coin . . . . .	“ 30
<i>Real</i> , do. do. . . . .	“ 35
<i>Toman</i> , a Persian gold coin . . . . .	“ 300

## MEASURE OF DISTANCES.

	Miles.
<i>Hour</i> of Turkey . . . . .	about 3
<i>Verst</i> of Russia . . . . .	“ $\frac{2}{3}$
<i>Fursakh</i> , or <i>aghaj</i> of Persia . . . . .	“ 4

## DISTANCES TRAVELLED.†

From Constantinople to Tokat . . . . .	474
— Tokat to Erzroom . . . . .	300
— Erzroom to Kars . . . . .	108
— Kars to Tiflis . . . . .	182
— Tiflis to Shoosha . . . . .	120
— Shoosha to Nakhchevan . . . . .	124
— Nakhchevan to Echmiadzin . . . . .	96
— Nakhchevan to Khoy . . . . .	50
— Khoy to Tebriz . . . . .	88
— Tebriz to Oormiah . . . . .	128
— Tebriz to Baycezed . . . . .	164

\* To prevent mistake, it is necessary to observe, that the rate of exchange is liable to great and constant variations in Turkey. The Spanish dollar was worth  $15\frac{1}{2}$  piastres when we landed at Smyrna, and that rate is made the basis of the following calculations. But the estimates thus formed would not express the true value of Turkish money a year before, nor at the present time.

† This tabular view of the estimated distances between the principal places visited during the journey beyond Constantinople, is calculated from minutes which were kept of the length of each stage as it was travelled, and of course does not aim at perfect accuracy. If two of the distances, which were passed over twice, be doubled, it gives the estimated length of the whole journey.





## DISTANCES TRAVELLED (continued).

From Bayezed to Erzroom . . . . .	147
— Erzroom to Trebizond . . . . .	219
Making the whole distance travelled by land after leaving Constantinople . . . . .	2408

## GLOSSARY.

Chai, a river : as Arpa-chai, Barley River.

Dagh, a mountain.

Ferman, a government passport in Turkey.

Fursakh, a measure of distance, equal to about four miles ; corresponding to the ancient *parasang*, and the Turkish *aghaj*.

Hisar (or hissar), a castle or fortification : as Ak-hissar, White-castle.

Kara, black : as Kara-bâgh, Black Garden ; Kara-dagh, Black Mountain.

Keleeseh, a church.

Ket-khoda (or Kakhia), a major-domo ; literally, a lord of a village.

Kharaj, the capitation tax levied in the Ottoman dominions on those who are not moslem. It is sometimes written, haratch.

Koy (or Kioy), a village.

Kulaah (or Kalaat), a fortress.

Melik, an Armenian prince.

Menzil-khaneh, a post-house.

Mihmandar, an officer appointed to receive and provide for a guest.

Mollah (or Moollah), a Mohammedan priest.

Mutsellim, a governor of a city.

Nargeely, a Turkish water-pipe.

Rayah, the name given in Turkey to those who are recognised as subjects.

The Armenians are so termed, while the Greeks are called *yesheer*, slaves ; and the Jews, *musafir*, strangers.

Sanjak, (literally, a banner,) a subdivision of a pashalik.

Sheey (or Sheeah, i. e. sectary), the name given by the Sonnite or orthodox moslem, to the sect of Ali, which is dominant in Persia.

Sonnite (or Sunny), an orthodox mussulman of the sect dominant in Turkey.

Suriy (or Surajee), a Turkish postilion.

Tezkereh, a custom-house passport in Turkey.

Vartabed, an Armenian monk in priest's orders.

Wekeel (vakeel), a vicar, attorney, or lieutenant.

Yoghoort, sour curdled milk.

## RESEARCHES IN ARMENIA.

### LETTER I.

#### SMYRNA AND CONSTANTINOPLE.

Object of the journey—Departure from Malta—Arrival at Smyrna—The Armenians of Smyrna—Their Academy—Papal Armenians—Departure from Smyrna—Magnesia—Thyatira—Galembéh—Bali-kesr—A dismal night—Soo-sughurlúk—Mahalúj—A Turkish coffee-house—Arrival at Constantinople—Visit to the Armenian Patriarch—Origin of his see, and manner of his election—His rank and power—His expenses and income—Evils attendant upon his election, and upon the appointment of bishops—Intolerant nature of his government—Patriarchate of Jerusalem—Armenian primates of the capital—Armenian academy—State of education—Printing press at Orta-köy—Papal Armenians.

DEAR SIR,

IT was to ascertain the state of the Armenians *in their own country*, that Mr. Dwight and myself were commissioned to undertake the present journey. We were advised to take Smyrna, or at least Constantinople, in our way, merely to obtain facilities for ulterior movements. Our inquiries, therefore, in those cities, were specially directed to the main field of our investigations. You will of course hardly expect a detailed account even of their Armenian inhabitants, and will need such an account the less, as you have already the reports of so many that have preceded us. I shall present Smyrna and Constantinople merely as stages on the high road to Armenia; and, in general, as in our journey we hastened to reach that country as speedily as possible, I shall endeavour to do the same in my report.

The instructions of the Prudential Committee, dated the 19th of January, 1830, were brought to Malta by Mr. Dwight on the 27th of February. We both felt the importance of the suggestion, that the mountains of Armenia could be travelled most easily in the summer months, and were gratified at finding ourselves ready on the 17th of March, to proceed to Smyrna in the vessel which



brought Mr. Dwight from Boston. In the channel of Seso, we were overtaken by a ship, thirty-four days from New York, which brought the last intelligence that reached us from our native country, except what we gleaned from Paris and St. Petersburg gazettes, until we arrived at Constantinople on our return.

We landed at Smyrna on the 26th of March, and were welcomed by a circle of our countrymen and Christian friends. There is still a light burning in the "candlestick" of Smyrna. A few are found there who love the Saviour, and are ever ready to welcome the missionary, and speed him on his way. We were cheered by their Society, aided by their Christian counsel, and encouraged by a promise of their prayers. And being there on Easter, we commemorated, with the church at Smyrna, the dying love of our Lord.—The sixteen days of our stay passed away pleasantly, in the hospitable family of our countryman and fellow labourer, the Rev. Mr. Brewer.

Little information could be obtained respecting regions so far in the interior as those we proposed to visit. No European mercantile establishment was found, having branches or correspondents in that direction, to whom we could take letters of recommendation or of credit. The extensive internal trade of Smyrna appears to be almost exclusively in the hands of native merchants. An Armenian of the city was able to give us letters to Tokát, Echmiádzin, and Tifflís. An Indian Armenian also, recently from Bushire, where he had been treasurer to the English Residency, gave us valuable hints respecting our route, and the best mode of travelling; and afterwards likewise kindly forwarded to us, of his own accord, letters to archbishop Nérses at Tifflís, and to the Catholicos at Echmiádzin. Our European friends readily furnished us with facilities for obtaining at Constantinople all that we needed.

The Armenians of Smyrna are estimated at 8,000, including those who are gone over to the papal church, and are known chiefly as thrifty merchants and active brokers. They have but one church. In this twelve priests officiate in turn, at the head of whom is a bishop. The present occupant of the see is Gabriel, patriarch of Jerusalem. Being too inefficient to manage the intrigues of the monks, and to avert the extortions of the Turks, he was obliged, some time ago, to leave that city, and is now enjoying his ease in this quiet flock, while a more able spirit is endeavouring to extricate his convent from its multiplied embarrassments.





The priests are uneducated, with the exception of one, who was then at the head of the Armenian academy, but is since dead.

The Armenian academy is an interesting object. It has been in operation about thirty years, and is the only school in the place for the Armenians; the few taught by the priests being hardly of sufficient importance to be named. The building, which was erected about five years ago, is situated in the church-yard, and is a specimen of Armenian taste and neatness. The establishment is said to be possessed of ample funds, chiefly the result of legacies; and it being a free school, any Armenian who chooses can send his children. The number of scholars was about two hundred. They occupied different apartments, and were of all ages and grades of learning, from the abecedarian to the student of logic. We were gratified to find the New Testament in their hands. It was introduced, at the suggestion of the agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, by Bóghos, the professor of grammar, as a class-book for those whom he was teaching the ancient Armenian. I had become acquainted with this interesting layman in a former visit, and was sorry to find him now in ill health, and excused from his duties in the school. He is a scholar in his own language, a friend to scriptural as well as scientific education, and would be a useful coadjutor to a missionary, at the same time that he would himself derive advantage from such a friend. He gave us a letter to his former master, the head of a similar school at Constantinople, with a hint that we should find him enlightened and friendly. We have since learned, that he never resumed his connexion with the school at Smyrna, but found a more eligible situation at Broosa, from whence he has drawn upon the Bible depository at Smyrna for two hundred New Testaments for his pupils.

We heard the papal Armenians estimated at 2000, or 3000. But I can hardly persuade myself that they are so numerous, although they have undoubtedly multiplied within a short time. A few years ago there were none, except a few emigrants from the vicinity of Nakhcheván. They have no church, but attend worship at the Latin chapels, of which there are two, the Austrian and the French. Their popery gives them a partiality for Europeans; for, alas! in Turkey, a European, in his influence upon the natives, at least, is almost of course a papist. They are consequently better



acquainted with foreign languages than their orthodox countrymen. And, although the light of Europe shines upon them through the lurid clouds of Romish bigotry, they yet discern sufficient to give them a superiority in education and general intelligence, over those who have no religious partialities to direct their eyes away from Turkey.

On the morning of the 12th of April, we found ourselves in readiness to depart for Constantinople. The chance of encountering a north wind at the Dardanelles, which rendered the length of a passage by sea very uncertain, and might prolong it several weeks, determined us to go by land. We could not hire caravan horses for the whole distance, and even with post horses should be exposed to many inconveniences without a tartar; so we yielded to the advice of friends, and engaged the *tartar aghasy* (aga of the tartars) to furnish us with a tartar and post-horses to Constantinople. We had a fellow-countryman and one attendant in company, so that we were four in number; and our horses amounted to ten, including those of the tartar and two *sürrijies* (postillions). Mústafa, the tartar, having seen our baggage loaded, and received the half of his pay, according to agreement, delivered to each a formidable *kumchy* (whip), and we mounted at 9 A.M. As we moved northward over the plain of Boornabát, the size of its olives and the extent of its vineyards made us admire its fertility; while the quince in blossom, and the fig just putting forth its leaves, added to the charms of a lovely morning. Numerous springs, gushing out from the verdant declivities of the hills beyond, were grateful to us, whose latest associations contrasted them with the naked rocks of Malta; while one of our companions, having recently learned in the deserts of Nubia, to be choice of so precious an element, seemed ready to charge Providence with a blameable want of economy, in suffering so much of it to be wasted. But the Psalmist was taught by a better philosophy to admire the provident care of Him that "sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills," for "*they give drink to every beast of the field.*" From the highest point we enjoyed a commanding

\* I think of no better term by which to designate the members of the proper oriental Armenian church. It certainly does not become *Protestants* to countenance the exclusiveness of Rome, by calling them, in her dialect, *Schismatics*. The papal Armenians are the real *schismatics* from their proper church.

view of the plain of Magnesia, and then hastened towards it by a long and rapid descent. As we approached the town, Mústafa, placing himself in our rear, cracked his whip, and crying *haideh* (go along), quickened the pace of our horses, and drove us in much as if we, like them, were a herd of domestic animals.

Magnesia is at the northern base of a precipitous mountain, formerly called Sipylus, the southern declivity of which is visible from Smyrna, and was still striped with snow. The remains of a citadel, and a ruined city wall, crown the summit, and sweep down the steep side of a rugged hill between it and the town. Report assigns to the present city a population of 80,000; but in answer to a passing inquiry, we were told, that the Turkish families are but 8000, the Armenians 400, and the Greeks 800; there are also 100 or 150 of Jews.\* The Armenians have two churches, and are none of them papists.

*April 13.* We were on horseback again before day-break, and though the cold and damp of the night soon chilled and benumbed us, the sweet notes of the nightingale, and the rattling of the stork, gave interest to our ride over the battle ground of Scipio and Antiochus. We crossed the Hermus by a wooden bridge, while yet the darkness hid its fabled sands of gold; and when the day dawned, we found ourselves threading a serpentine path among the sloughs and ditches that intersect the alluvial surface of the great Lydian plain. It can hardly be exceeded in fertility, and still only a small part of it is under cultivation. Five hours and a quarter, in a north easterly direction, led us out along the banks of the *Koom-chai* (sand river, the ancient Hyllus), where it enters it on its way to the Hermus. Then, crossing an undulating and uncultivated though arable tract, we reached Ak-hisár, the ancient Thyatira, at a quarter before 1 P.M.

Curiosity to see as much as we could of a town where once flourished one of the apocalyptic churches, made us improve, to the best advantage, the few hours of our delay. Ak-hisár occupies an eminence elevated but little above the surrounding alluvial and marshy plain; and having been reduced to ashes a year or two ago, its houses were now mostly of one story, and built of boards. Its population can amount to but little more than 1000 families, of which 300 may be Greek, and 25 or 30 Armenian. Walking

\* Throughout Western Asia, population is customarily reckoned by families or houses, instead of individuals. A family or house will probably average nearly five persons.





through its streets, we observed many inscriptions and broken pillars, and were offered numerous coins, the relics of Thyatira. An ancient church, now a mosque, was mentioned to us among its curiosities, but in vain did we solicit a number of Christians to conduct us to it. At length an old Turk offered to be our guide, and we hastened with eagerness to examine it. Its foundations and some broken and fallen columns bespoke a high antiquity, and a few aged cypresses threw over the precincts a gloom befitting the spot. As we entered the yard, two Turks, performing their devotions in the portico, looked around upon us with an expression that called us infidel intruders, and made us feel that the lamp of true religion, which once burnt brightly in this "candlestick," was extinguished in the darkness of Mohammedanism. The door was locked, and no arguments could obtain the key without leave of the governor, which we had not time to obtain. So we reluctantly turned away from a spot, which, as Christians, we felt that we had almost a sacred right to visit.

After four or five hours delay, we mounted again to complete our day's journey of 18 hours, or about 54 miles. Night soon closed upon us, and we had a chilly and cheerless ride over miry and rough roads to Galembéh. We arrived a little before midnight, and our supper of piláv was brought in at half-past one.

*April 14.* The sun was up before we were aware; and without stopping to make inquiries, or to breakfast, we mounted our horses at 6 A.M. I can only say that Galembéh is a market town of some 500 or 600 Turkish families, situated on a small branch of the Caicus. A hungry ride over a mountainous tract, covered with stunted oaks which had not yet begun to put forth their leaves, brought us, at a quarter past 11, to a solitary khan, named from an adjacent fountain, *Kuz-chesméh* (virgin fountain). It was a hovel of reeds and mud, with one end planted against the side of a hill, and kept by an old man who had nothing to give us but dirty coffee, spoiled *yoghoort* (curdled milk), and sour milk, without even a morsel of bread. Our double meal of breakfast and dinner, on such materials, was soon finished; and, continuing our ride, we descended into an open valley, where is the warm bath of Utélly. Its water springs from the ground, of a temperature considerably above blood-heat, while within a few rods is another fountain pure and cold, for the refreshment of the traveller. The broad plain of Bali-kesr beyond seemed larger, more beautiful and



fertile, than even that of Magnesia ; but, like that, only a small part was cultivated. Bali-kesr itself, where we stopped for the night, contains about 2000 Turkish, and 200 Armenian families, and is governed by an aga who has under him forty villages including Galembeh, inhabited only by Turks. Its houses, like those of almost every place on this road, are made of unburnt bricks, and have a mean appearance.

*April 15.* We were detained for want of horses till half past 5 P.M. when we got under way in a cold rain storm. Daylight forsook us before we left the plain ; and we entered and crossed a mountainous region beyond, in one of the most dismal nights I have seen. In obedience to our tartar, we arranged ourselves in Indian file, and as near to each other as possible, that none might lose the path. Still, so great was the darkness that we were enabled to keep in each others track, only by the cries of the sürijies, and an occasional sight of two or three white horses in the company, or perchance the sparks of a pipe, which some companion had lighted to drive away sleep. Even with these aids, some one would occasionally drop behind, or, instead of descending with the rest, run along the side of a declivity, to the no small danger of his neck. A drizzling rain wet us to the skin ; and a cold north wind, blowing in our faces, seemed to penetrate to the heart. The *path* (it was not a *road*) could hardly have been worse ; sometimes passing through bushes that almost dismounted us, at others descending steeps which well nigh pitched us headlong, and frequently crossing ditches that could be leaped only by an effort that threw our poor animals upon their knees. Our baggage horses got completely mired more than once. On the brink of how many frightful precipices we passed I know not, for the darkness kindly covered them. About midway a light issuing from a hovel, the only building we saw, invited us to enter. Never was a fire more grateful, nor coffee more refreshing. At length, just as the day dawned, and at the foot of the last mountain, we entered the village of Soo-sughurluk. The only warm room in the *menzil-khaneh* (post-house) was filled with brawny Turks, stretched upon their carpets, and sleeping in the fumes of the tobacco they had smoked in the evening. Mustafa's authority procured us, with some difficulty, a spot to spread out half our beds, and stripping off our drenched garments, we sought a little warm and sweet repose.





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*April 16.* When called by our tartar to proceed, we found that the storm had not at all abated, and putting on our damp clothes, we mounted again in the rain at half past 10 A.M. The plains and mountains which we had crossed thus far, run towards the Archipelago; but the plain, into the head of which we had now descended, extends northward to the sea of Mármora, the direction of our route. A river of some size flows through it the whole extent, and together with the frequent marshes that intersect its low alluvial surface, adapts it peculiarly to that semi-amphibious animal, the buffalo, as the name *Soo-sughurlúk* (place of water-cows, i. e. buffaloes,) imports. Towards evening the rain ceased, and we arrived at Mahalúj a little before sunset. Only bread and eggs could be obtained for our breakfast, dinner, and supper, which, to the great increase of appetite, the want of food during the day obliged us to crowd into one evening meal.

*April 17.* A ride of two hours and a quarter in the morning brought us to an inlet of the sea of Mármora, which serves as the port of Mahalúj. The wind was contrary, and obliged us to lounge away the day in a coffee-house, filled with Turkish travellers, who, like ourselves, were waiting for a change of wind. The public room was spacious, and fitted up with enclosures six or eight feet square, arranged around its sides and in the centre, like the pews of an old-fashioned church, except that their floors were raised some three feet from the ground, and their partitions were hardly a foot in height. Each party had appropriated one of these, and sitting upon a carpet, if it was so fortunate as to have one, was busy in the two favorite Turkish employments of smoking and meditation. The *kahwíyy* (coffee-maker) at his fire place, a prominent spot opposite the front door, was almost the only active man; and the occasional low conversation of a party, mingled with the gurgling of *nargeelies* (water-pipes), and frequent calls for fire to light a pipe, or coffee to treat a friend, was almost the only noise in this company of forty or fifty travellers. We sought and obtained a small private apartment, not to escape from noise, but for liberty of unrestrained conversation ourselves.

*April 18.* On entering the Sea of Mármora, this morning, we found the wind still strong against us. It soon brought on a shower of rain, and drove us into a harbour, in the little island of Kaló-limnos for the day.

*April 19.* The south wind blowing softly in the morning, we



sailed at sunrise, and early in the afternoon reached the capital. As we passed around Seraglio point, itself the perfection of beautiful scenery, and surrounded by views that entrance the beholder, we would fain have obtained a more distinct impression by the aid of a spy-glass; but our Turkish companions indignantly checked the curiosity that would take a nearer view of the forbidden beauties of the palace of their Sultán, and for the sake of peace we laid down our glass.

I propose not to detain you at Constantinople, any more than at Smyrna, by general descriptions. Let us take a glance at the Armenians, and then move onward to their country.

We made an early call upon the Armenian patriarch, and repeated our visit before we left. He has so intimate a connection with the state of the Armenian church throughout the empire, that I will not only relate to you our intercourse with him, but will also present some general facts respecting his patriarchate.—We were first conducted to his *wekeel* (vicar), an officer corresponding to the chief secretary of a civil governor. He was a gentlemanly and intelligent ecclesiastic, about thirty-five years of age. His inquiries showed that he detected our object before we had time to declare it; and he soon put the direct question, whether we were to preach to the Jews, or, since there were already some missionaries for them, whether we should not attend to the Armenians. The several Armenian ecclesiastics, who have been connected with us at Beyroot and at Malta, immediately came under review, and no doubt remained in our minds, that the patriarch of Constantinople keeps himself constantly informed of our operations among his people. The patriarch himself, to whom we were soon introduced, betrayed even more extended information, by remarks respecting Mr. Wolff's proceedings in Persia. He was a corpulent man, of about forty-five, remarkably kind and flattering in his address, and seemed to tax his countenance and his tongue to the utmost, to make us understand how much he loved us and was delighted by our visit. In fact, we could with difficulty civilly avoid spending the night at his palace. Our conversation, at each visit, covered considerable ground, and the information it elicited will be presented, as it shall be called for by the introduction of the several topics, in the course of our journey.

The *origin* of this patriarchal see, as you may learn from the



Introduction, dates at the capture of Constantinople by the Tartars, A.D. 1453; and was owing to the appointment of the Sultán, Mohammed Second.—The *nomination* of its incumbent is exercised by the Armenian primates of the capital. The person whom they elect, receives from the Sultán a fermán of confirmation, and is then patriarch. His removal from office is like his appointment. Very rarely does the Sultán attempt it, unless solicited by the primates; then he deposes one and confirms another at their will.

In *rank*, the patriarch does not differ, as to spiritual matters, from the other bishops. He can no more ordain a bishop, nor consecrate the *meirón* (holy oil), than they. But in a more secular sense, he is the head of the Armenian church in Turkey. Through him alone can that church, or its officers, or members as such, communicate with government; and only through him, also, does the government control the church establishment. In a word, he is regarded by the Sultán as the responsible head of his sect. Of course he must be clothed with considerable powers. They are defined by the most solemn fermáns of the government, which, as the office is one of its own creation for state convenience, is interested in maintaining its authority. In his own diocese, as bishop of Constantinople, the patriarch exerts his authority over the priests and people directly. An instance occurred while we were there, of his imprisoning two priests for having turned papists. One claimed Russian protection, and was consequently delivered up to the Reis-effédy and released; the other remained in the patriarchal prison till his recantation opened its doors. In other parts, the direct exercise of his power extends only to the bishops; but they are so dependant upon him, that his influence in their dioceses must be very great. He appoints, recalls, and even banishes them to distant parts of the empire. A special fermán for every such act must, indeed, be issued by government; but a hint from him, with a few piasters, is sufficient to obtain it. Besides thus controlling the bishops, he also divides or unites dioceses, so that their number and limits are never fixed. The city which had a distinct bishop last year, may this year be subject to the bishop of some other city, which then formed part of still another diocese.

The *extent* of the patriarch's jurisdiction is the same with that of the empire, excepting only so much as is embraced in the patriarchate of Jerusalem. The Catholicos of Sis, the history of



whose see has been sketched in the Introduction, presents the singular anomaly of a superior placed in dependance upon an inferior. In spiritual rank he is one grade above the patriarch and the other bishops, inasmuch as he can ordain bishops and consecrate the meirón. But he is regarded by government only as a high metropolitan, pays to the patriarch, instead of the Sultán direct, his annual tribute, and can only obtain through him, like other bishops, the fermáns for which he has occasion. Only for his election he is not dependant. That rests with some ten or fifteen primates, (of his diocese, I believe,) and the bishops and monks of his convent. The Catholicos of Aghtamár is probably as independent of the patriarch, as the Kürds, in whose country his see is situated, are of the Sultán. Of this whole system, indeed, it ought to be remarked, that, in such a despotic and unsettled government as Turkey, it must be subject to many irregularities. The patriarch's power being borrowed from the Sultán, wherever the latter is unable to execute his orders, there will the authority or protection of the other cease to be felt.

The *fiscal concerns* of the establishment must not be overlooked. The patriarch pays to the Sultán an annual tribute, called, from its being paid at different times, *mukáttaa* (instalment); and it is the only regular contribution expected by the government from the Armenian church, or its officers in their ecclesiastical capacity. To obtain his fermán of confirmation, however, every new patriarch is obliged to distribute among the chief officers of the Porte a large amount in presents. Such pecuniary obligations, are sources of no small embarrassment; but the patriarch will not throw them upon the primates and bishops, for he would thus lose the advantages of power and profit derived from the collection of the sums necessary to meet them.—As the see has no glebes nor funds, it becomes important to inquire from whence it derives an amount equal to this tribute, these presents, and its current and incidental expenses. As bishop of Constantinople, the patriarch has, within that diocese, all the sources of episcopal income, which are common to other bishops, and will be hereafter specified. From every other diocese the incumbent bishop pays him an annual *mukáttaa*, reserving to himself its collection. Upon being appointed to a diocese, also, every bishop gives the patriarch a present more or less liberal according to circumstances. Occasionally recourse is likewise had to sources of income that are extraordinary. When





the patriarch gets too deeply in debt to extricate himself, the wealthy Armenians of the capital sometimes contribute liberally to his relief.\*

Let us see how a hierarchy, originated and upheld like this by a Mohammedan power, operates. *The choice of a patriarch, or, as the case may be, his deposition, is a fruitful source of intrigues, strifes, and corruption.* The voice of the primates cannot always be unanimous, nor nearly so. Indeed, as they are not a regularly appointed body, nor their numbers fixed, it may easily happen that more than one candidate will claim a majority. In such a case, as the patriarchate is an object of ambition, parties must almost necessarily run too high for either to submit, except to the voice of an authoritative arbitrator. That arbitrator is of course the Porte, and the only weight that will move the balance of its decision, is money. The candidate that offers the highest present for confirmation, is confirmed; and as often as his unsuccessful rival offers more, the confirmation is recalled and given to him. Even the mukáttaa, though its amount is considered fixed, does not always escape at such times without being increased. Thus the highest office of a Christian church is virtually set up at auction, a moslem holds the hammer, and takes the offer of the highest bidder. In this case, as in most others, a quarrel among Christians becomes a direct source of income to the Turk. How can he be expected, then, especially as his religious prejudices coincide entirely with the interest of his purse, to check the evil? There is, however, an important check, in the fact that the primates, in whose divisions the evil originates, are ultimately called upon to contribute heavily from their own purses, when the amount of the bribes exceeds the patriarchal resources.—The actual history of the patriarchate, is, in fact, little else than a history of intrigues.

\* Many of the facts, upon which the account here attempted of the Armenian patriarchate of Constantinople is based, were obtained during our visit to that place. They have been multiplied and digested by the aid of the Armenian bishop Dionysius, (commonly called Carabét,) at Malta; who, besides being a native of Constantinople, was once, for a time, connected with the patriarchate. The whole has been submitted for confirmation, to Hagóp Abgár, (usually called Yacob Aga,) another uncommonly intelligent Armenian bishop in Syria, who once had the business of the patriarchate in his hands as wekeel; and also to the Rev. Mr. Goodell, for some time resident upon the spot.

Bishop Hagóp adds, at this place, the following note.—The mukáttaa, when he was wekeel of the patriarch, was 10,000 piastres, [a thousand dollars or more.] Of this sum, Angora (from 36 villages) contributed about 1000, Isnikmíd 1000, Kaisariéh 800, Moosh 500, Tekirdagh 500, Smyrna 500, Sívás 500, Sis 500, Adreneh 500, Erzroom 450, Diarbekr 450, Orfah 400, Arabkir 400, Tokát 300, Kütáya 300, Baiboort 250, Amásia and Marsován 200, Shebin-kara-hisar 200, Trebizond 150, Terján 150, Gümish-kháneh 100. A few other places of minor importance made up the sum.

During fifty years in the seventeenth century, fourteen persons were raised to the office of patriarch, one of whom was elected and deposed no less than nine times, the whole number of elections and depositions was nearly forty, and one priest held the office for six years (including one in which he was supplanted by an individual raised directly from the humble employment of baker), before he was ordained bishop. Four times the primates, instead of electing a patriarch, kept the office in their own hands, and on one occasion, increased the mukáttaa from 100,000 to 140,000 ákcheh\*, that they might be allowed to retain it. A *vartabéd* (clerical monk) supplanted them by increasing it, in addition to large presents, to 400,000 ákcheh, and hired a Turkish guard for an extravagant sum, to enable him to make good his claims. But his rivals proved too powerful for him; he was thrown into the common prison, and there shortly after perished by poison.†

*The appointment of bishops is also productive of much intrigue and corruption.* The patriarch naturally wishing to realize a large income, will generally, if there are rival candidates, as there cannot fail to be, give the appointment to him that offers the highest present. The inaugural present, too, is a direct premium to the greatest possible instability of the episcopal office; for the oftener one bishop is recalled and another appointed, the oftener does it come into the patriarchal treasury. One check upon these evil tendencies, is, that the people of the diocese in question, from whom these bribes must ultimately come, will, when their purses or their feelings are tampered with too far, make their complaints to be heard. Another, is, that most bishops take care to secure partisans among the primates upon whom the patriarch himself is dependant, and thus have authoritative advocates at hand to countertermine the intrigues that may be formed against them; circumstances having led them to imitate the system pursued by the pashás of the empire, who, as is well known, have their spies and agents in the very diván of the Sultan.

*Dissent, also, and free religious toleration is opposed.* The

\* The *ákcheh* (called aspron in Greek) was originally the only Turkish coin and denomination of money. The *pará*, which is equal to three ákcheh, was first coined in Egypt, and hence is called by the Arabs Misreeyeh (Egyptian). The *ghroosh* (piastre), equal to forty parás, is of still later origin.—The value of Turkish coin has decreased so much, that it would be difficult to determine the value of the ákcheh at the time here spoken of. Chardin, however, who was at Smyrna only fourteen years later, says it was worth a *demi-sol*, and that 120 were equal to an *écu*. *Voyages en Perse*, vol. 1, p. 16.

† Chamcheán, p. 7, c. 12—19.





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idea of government, is, that every sect of *rayáhs*, i. e. subjects not Mohammedan, forms a distinct nation, and must have a representative and responsible head at the capital. The Greeks, Armenians, and very recently the papal Armenians, have such a head in their patriarchs, and the Jews in their chief Rabbi; and are, of course, acknowledged as tolerated sects. The Jacobite Syrians having no other representative, the Armenian patriarch acts as their agent. Other sects, existing only in certain provinces, have a local toleration, without being represented at the capital; as the half-independent Maronites in mount Lebanon, and the Copts in Egypt. With such an idea for the basis of its legislation, the government of course looks upon every new sect, other than those already acknowledged and represented, as an unwelcome intruder. Do any of the Armenians forsake their church for such a sect? The patriarch has only to report them as insubordinate, to bring them into embarrassment. For the very fact that they have revolted from him, makes them infractors of a fundamental principle of the empire, and they no longer rank among its protected subjects. This system, like every other in Turkey, is liable to many irregularities, and probably nowhere has so much force as at the capital. To the Greek islands it hardly applied at all, they being represented by islands and not by sects.

The case of the papal Armenians illustrates its operation, and is, therefore, full of instruction to protestant missionaries. Their numbers at the capital and in other places were considerable; they were, as a body, more intelligent than their countrymen; among them were men to whom uncommon wealth and official station gave great influence; and European sympathy was altogether on their side. Still they were every where obliged to rank as a part of the flock of the patriarch. They could have no churches of their own; their priests could not wear the clerical garb, nor be known as such, except under the shadow of European influence; and at baptisms, marriages, and burials, they were obliged to call upon the Armenian clergy, and pay them the accustomed fees. Such, very nearly, was their situation even at Angora, where they amounted to many thousands, while the Armenians were only a few hundred. The Sultán, having been informed of the part the Persian Armenians had taken in the late war of Russia with Persia, deemed it necessary, when anticipating, in the beginning of 1828, a rupture with the same power himself, to remind the patriarch



that he must be responsible for the good conduct of his nation. He replied, that for all who belonged to his flock he would readily be responsible; but that there were some who did not acknowledge his authority, and for them he could not pledge himself. The names of such were demanded; and he sent them in. The persecution which came upon them, when thus placed in the predicament of an unacknowledged dissenting sect, is well known. The banishment of the laity seems to have been almost peculiar to the capital and its suburbs, and was ordered under the pretence that every one must return to his own city, and of course they to Angora from whence they had come.\* But the persecution was felt in the most distant parts, and even in the Kùrdish pashalik of Bayezed their priests were searched out and banished.†

The patriarchate of Jerusalem, when the dominions of the power that created it were united to the Ottoman empire, would probably itself have fallen to the share of the patriarch of Constantinople, had not the primates, by whom he is himself appointed, taken it

\* Khatti-shereef. Jan. 10, 1828.

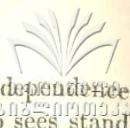
† The punishment, which the chief Rabbi was able to bring upon the Jews baptized by the Rev. Mr. Hartley, is another illustration of the same intolerant system. Hartley's *Researches in Greece and the Levant*, p. 211—219.

The papal Greeks of Syria seem, at first view, to form a real exception of an unrepresented dissenting sect enjoying complete toleration. But the following note, kindly added here by the Rev. Mr. Bird, of Beyroot, on perusing this letter, explains the anomaly.

“It appears from report, that this schism owes its commencement to certain emissaries of the pope, chiefly Jesuits and Franciscans, who came to Aleppo and began their operations about the year —. They recommended themselves by their learning, their medical services, and their alms. The Greeks were found in a very neglected state, and were put to shame for their lifelessness and ignorance in all things regarding religion. They therefore, by degrees, began to embrace the new doctrines of their papal benefactors, until, in a few years, the new converts became the stronger party; and after two or three ineffectual struggles of their former brethren to prevent it, took open possession of the Greek church. The work of conversion still went on, until, through shame and other inducements, scarcely a family remained on the side of the orthodox Greeks.

“This was the state of things at Aleppo, when there appeared among them a bishop by the name of Germanus Adam, a man of uncommon talents, who held some peculiar notions in regard to the words of consecration in the service of the mass. On this subject the new sect became divided, and after much contention, the party of the bishop, after his decease, and through the influence of a clever Greek bishop, returned to their ancient faith, and obtained a fermán from Constantinople which secured to them the church, and authorized them to bring their adversaries to their worship by coercion. In consequence, some of the papal party were driven away, some apprehended and sent into banishment, and a number murdered.

“Since then, the present Greek patriarch of Damascus has thought it politic to give up the persecution, and to obtain the restoration of the fugitive and banished individuals. The sect therefore remains at present in a state of perfect toleration; and in consequence of many of them being employed as scribes and agents about the local governments, their power, especially since the Greek insurrection in Europe, is decidedly superior to that of the orthodox. When it was at first reported that the Sultán intended to appoint a common head of the three sects of popish converts, viz. the Armenians, Greeks, and Syrians, and that this head was for the present an Armenian, the Greeks expressed their determination sooner to return to their mother church, than to yield obedience to a chief from their Armenian brethren; and so they still remain, as it appears, nominally unknown at Constantinople.”



into their own hands. In fact, the question of its independence did for some time remain undecided; but now the two sees stand upon nearly the same footing. The patriarch of Jerusalem pays his mukáttaa directly to the Sultán, and takes out fermáns in his own name, for which, and for other purposes, he has an agent residing in the capital; and not only does his nomination rest with the primates of Constantinople, but they also take upon themselves to control the funds and the internal government of his diocese. They procured the recal of the patriarch Gabriel, who is now bishop of Smyrna. By mismanagement, a part of which was attributed him, the convent of St. James (the patriarchal residence at Jerusalem) had incurred an immense debt. To remedy the embarrassment, the primates sent seven inspectors\* to assume the whole management of its concerns, leaving to the patriarch merely the physical power of putting his seal to documents of their composition. He, unwilling thus to be made a cypher, neither acknowledged their authority, nor welcomed them to his convent. The primates, consequently, provoked by his obstinacy, sent men clothed with power from the Sultán, to bring the helpless prelate forthwith to the capital.—The patriarchate extends over Egypt, and the pashaliks of Acre, Damascus, and Tripoli; and pays a mukáttaa to Damascus, as well as to Constantinople.†

You will naturally wish to know more of such an important body of men as the Armenian primates of Constantinople. The church universally acknowledges, to a certain extent, the voice of the laity in its government. In every place we find individuals who stand forth and act for their fellow-citizens. Such individuals in the capital, where questions of national interest are started, naturally act as representatives of the nation. Hence the primates are regarded by the government in this light. We were not able to learn that they are chosen in any other way, than by the general consent or opinion of the public informally expressed. Whoever by his wealth, birth, or talents, can make his influence felt as a

\* One of them was bishop Dionysius already referred to.

† The sum paid to the Sultán, says Bishop Hagóp, is sometimes 1500 piastres; that paid to the pashá of Damascus is now fixed at 80 purses, or 40,000 piastres. Such was also its original amount under Jezzár pasha. From his time, however, it was gradually increased to the enormous sum of 800,000 piastres, when Bishop Hagóp was employed to obtain a khattishereef from the Sultán for reducing it to the original sum. A fermán had been previously obtained to the same effect; but, through the management of the Damascus authorities, it was found entirely useless. The fermán cost 13,300 dollars, and the expense of the khattishereef was 11,000 dollars more; nearly the whole of which sums was expended in presents to the officers and servants about the Sultán.





primate, is a primate. Their number of course cannot be fixed, but it does not vary far from twenty-four. They are immensely rich, and are generally connected with government, or its officers, as bankers.

The Armenian academy was visited by us at the same time that we called upon the patriarch, it being within the same precincts as his residence. But before entering it, I must say a word respecting those precincts in general, the neatness, finish, and taste of which are such as to transfer one, the moment he enters them, away from Turkey. They embrace a spacious palace for the patriarch, three churches side by side, sufficiently large for a congregation of several thousands, and commodious apartments for the school, besides various rooms for other purposes. The whole has been built since the old church was burnt at the destruction of the janizaries. The expense was defrayed by voluntary contribution, and more than half came from the purse of one primate, named Bezján Harütün, who is banker to the mint. I have not found in the Mediterranean a church with so little to be objected to, and so much to be praised, as these three. In simplicity they even excel our own, for not a pew nor a bench breaks the evenness of their plain carpeted floors. Pictures adorn the walls, but they are very few, and executed in good taste.

We were received by Gregory Peshdemalján, the principal of the academy, with a cordiality suited to the account of him, which we had received from Bóghos, of Smyrna. He is a layman, well acquainted with the language and literature of his nation, and himself the author of a very respectable grammar and dictionary of the ancient Armenian. We found him surrounded by a company of young men, fifteen or sixteen years of age, possessed of the fair and ingenuous countenance, so peculiar to the young Armenians of Smyrna and Constantinople. They were members of the highest department of the school. The lowest, embraces the children of the poor, who are taught gratuitously to read and write. In the second, are others of more respectable connexions, who are studying the same branches. The members of the third, now forty or fifty in number, are introduced to the elements of grammar. That study they complete when advanced to the fourth under Gregory, the number in which is about the same. They were generally possessed of uncommonly interesting countenances, and had an appearance of great neatness and order, as they sat, each upon his

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cushion or carpet, in double or triple rows around the floors. The whole number of scholars was not far from 300. It has a considerable income from a fund, contributed by the same primate who aided so liberally in erecting the buildings of the establishment, and the remainder of its expenses are borne by the Armenian community.—There are schools attached to the other Armenian churches, but none of them are of much repute. We were told also that private schools for girls are not uncommon; but we got admission to none of them.

It is painful to find, that none of the modern improvements in primary education, have been introduced, even in this most enlightened part of the Armenian nation. The only thing that shews a tendency that way, is, the use of a spelling book, and one or two other first books, in the modern Armenian, their vernacular dialect. Abundantly able helps in grammar, arithmetic, and some other branches have been issued from the press at Venice, as well as here, but they are in the ancient tongue, and accessible only to the few who understand it. Even in geography, I was surprised to find them so well supplied, that when we mentioned Andover as the place to which we should send a Persian dictionary, which the patriarch had the politeness to give us, a person present immediately referred to a book in ancient Armenian, not only describing its position accurately, but also that of the adjacent towns.

The Armenians have not only no department for foreign languages in the academy, nor any distinct school for them in the city, but the number acquainted with them is extremely small. As a reason, we were told, that the government has heretofore looked less favourably upon those who knew the languages of the Franks. The reason is plausible; but I have so often heard Christians in Turkey urge their existence under a Mohammedan government as an excuse for all their faults, whether barbarous customs, want of education, or even immorality of conduct, that I am inclined to suspect this to be only the standing apology, and entitled to no more weight. My suspicion is confirmed by the assurance of one of the oldest and most observing of the English residents at Péra, that he was not aware of the Turks having any jealousies against the education of their Christian subjects. The fact is, that the two great motives, which direct the education as well as the conduct of men, are religion and money. Neither of these leads the Armenians to cultivate foreign languages. The religion of their church

is not contained in Latin, nor in English, but in Armenian, and therefore only leads them to study the latter. From the Turks, and not from Europeans, as will be seen when I come to speak of the papal Armenians, do they expect employ and mercantile business, and an acquaintance therefore with the dialects of Turkey is all that they need for the acquisition of money.

A printing press belongs to the patriarchate, and a room is still assigned to it; but it is no longer in operation. There is, however, another in one of the villages on the Bosphorus, which we visited. Taking a boat at Top-khaneh, we were rowed to Orta-köy, as the village is called, in forty-five minutes. On entering the house, we found a venerable but active old man folding paper, who proved to be the head of the establishment. His father, he informed us, had it before him; and, as he was now himself eighty-four years old, it must have been in existence not far from a hundred years. Himself, his four sons, and eighteen grand children, form the family, or little clan of Aráb-oghloo, who are not only the owners, but do the work of the establishment. Government exercises no supervision over it, nor does it demand any taxes. It embraces a foundry, in which are cast a variety of Armenian, Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Rabbinical, Russian, and Arabic types. The latter they make only for the government press, for which they have recently cast a new font after the model of Persian manuscript, which pleases the Sultán so much, that he has granted the family, not a little to the gratification of the old gentleman's pride, the Mohammeden privilege of wearing yellow slippers. It is, he assured us, the only Armenian printing establishment in Turkey. We found three presses in the office, and they were printing in Armenian and Hebrew. Among the books printed here is the Persian dictionary already mentioned. It is in Persian, Armenian, and Turkish, and was composed by a learned Armenian, who died before it was printed. The same primate whose generosity I have had occasion to mention more than once already, caused an edition to be printed, and placed in the hands of the patriarch for gratuitous distribution among his countrymen. The book is a royal octavo of 700 pages, and the edition was about 700 copies.

The *papal Armenians* of Constantinople were estimated, at the time of their banishment, at 27,000; and most of them resided in Péra and Gálata, where they had the society and countenance of the Franks, and could attend the Latin chapels, of which there are





six or seven in the two places. Their condition before this event has been already alluded to. They have since returned, and are now one of the established Christian sects of the empire. Like the Christians in other parts of Turkey, who have embraced the faith of Rome, they are more respectable for wealth and intelligence than their countrymen; owing, doubtless, to their connexion with Europeans, to whom they are decidedly partial. For it is a well known part of the policy of papal missionaries to denationalize their converts, by substituting attachment to Rome and her children, for patriotic partialities. With the papal Greeks of the Archipelago, it has been carried so far, that many, who are of genuine Greek descent, consider it an insult to be called Greeks. The papal Armenians own the name of Armenian still, but they like the Franks better than their countrymen. Even in the interior of Turkey, 900 miles from Constantinople, a papal Armenian priest and his family, with whom Providence cast our lot for a night, announced themselves to us as brother Franks (supposing us to be of course papists), and treated us with more kindness than we experienced from any other natives the whole journey; at the same time that they exhibited a bitter enmity towards their Armenian neighbours. They naturally seek to learn the languages of their friends, and, in fact, have for this purpose a flourishing school in Péra. A key to European intelligence is thus acquired, and they of course become more enlightened than their countrymen.

The partiality is mutual. Does a papal European, let him be merchant, consul, or ambassador, wish to employ a native? He of course looks out for a papist. I base this remark upon the general fact, which no one acquainted can deny, that, in Smyrna and Constantinople, and indeed throughout the Levant, almost all the native Christians employed by papal Europeans are papists. Some particular cases also I have attentively watched. In an important town, which, in the course of events, had been nearly stripped of its Christian population, we found a papal gentleman, possessed of influence as the mercantile and political agent of a European consul, and made still more prominent by the fact that he was the only European in the place. With the proper Armenians he cultivated no friendship; they were even treated coldly when they called upon him. But his house was the home of papists. Did any one wish for his acquaintance or aid? His being a papist was urged as a prevailing plea. He knew and



counted every papist that moved into town. And if he remain, and his influence be sufficient, he will substitute a papal community for the numerous Armenian population that once inhabited the place. The nation he represents is protestant; but he has drunk deep of the party and proselyting spirit of Rome.

I am sorry that Europeans of the Romish church do not stand alone in this thing; the influence of protestants also rests in the same scale. The fact, that most of the native Christians employed by protestants in the Levant, are of the Romish persuasion, is one that those gentlemen themselves will not deny. The reason of it they perhaps hardly know; it certainly does not lie in any partiality for papacy. But are they aware of the strength they thereby add to the power of Rome, and the discouragements they heap upon other bodies of Christians, that would be as glad as themselves to see that power abolished? There can be no doubt that their partiality for papists, in deed, though not in intention, does actually discourage the other Christians from those attempts at education and improvement, which a contrary course would foster, to the great advance of their intelligence and general character. And would it not be the easiest possible thing for them, without trouble, or injury to their own interests, to withdraw the contribution of their influence from the pope, and direct it to a quarter where it would effectually weaken his antichristian power?

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## LETTER II.

### FROM CONSTANTINOPLE TO TOKAT.

Delay at Constantinople—Preparations for the journey—Reflections at starting—Gébizeh—Isnikmíd—A wedding procession—Sábanjah—Buffaloes—Khandék—Temporal influence of Mohammedanism—A Turkish saint—Dootjeh—A night's ride—Boly—Gérideh—Turkish intemperance—Cherkésh—Mode of travelling—Karajalár—Deception of our Tartar—Rapid travelling—Kharajulén—Koj-hisar—Angora—Turkish fountains—Tósia—Haji Hámzeh—Dangerous pass—Osmanjúk—Marsován—Turkish superstition—Amásia—Habits of Tartars—A civil Turk—A Derbénd—Drowsiness in riding—Toorkhál.

DEAR Sir,

It was on the morning of the 21st of May, that we took leave of the capital of Turkey, and set our faces towards Armenia. Our detention had been longer than we had anticipated; but we re-



gretted it the less, as it brought our journey, through one of the most delightful countries in the world, into the most charming season of the year. We had also the consolation of reflecting, that perhaps it had not been altogether useless, as, by the politeness of Mr. Rhind, who was then negotiating a treaty between the government of the United States and the Porte, we had had an opportunity to preach every Sabbath to a large part of the English residents, who were then without a chaplain. The friends generally, to whom we had been introduced by letters from Smyrna, had treated us with no little hospitality and kindness. By their aid we had been able to fix definitely our route to the farthest point which we finally reached; and we ever found reason to think it the best we could have taken. They had helped us, also, to many facilities that contributed materially to the successful accomplishment of our journey.

The same reason that made us come by land from Smyrna, increased by the fact that the north winds had now set in for the season, induced us to decline a passage by water to Trebizond.\* The tardy movements of a caravan also, which, without allowing for detentions, would take at least thirty-five or forty days to Erzroom, threatened to make our journey too long; and we therefore again put ourselves under a tartar. For greater security, we caused him to set his seal to a written contract, in the presence of the tartar aghasy, who thus became responsible, on the part of government, for our persons and property; and in consideration of this, had a claim upon our tartar for ten per cent. of the money we paid him.

Trunks were too frail and too awkwardly loaded for the rapid mode of travelling we had selected; and we therefore substituted for them two large bags fitted to be attached to each other, and slung one on each side of a horse, two saddle-bags, and two valises, all of thick Russian leather, made impermeable to water by a lining of waxed cloth, and so constructed as to be fastened with a pad-

\* There seemed to be but two winds at Constantinople, the north and the south. The former prevails, with occasional intermissions, during summer; and, combined with the strong current of the Bosphorus, prevents all vessels from entering the Black Sea while it blows. It is much cooler and damper than the latter, and a change of wind rarely fails to produce a decided change of temperature and of weather. A meteorological table, kept by Mr. Dwight, shewed some changes while we were there, of  $17^{\circ}$  and  $20^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit in six or eight hours. The lowest temperature in the open shade, at 8 o'clock A.M. from the 20th of April to the 20th of May, was  $48^{\circ}$ , and the highest  $71^{\circ}$ ; the average temperature at that hour was about  $57^{\circ}$ . The lowest temperature at 3 o'clock P.M. was  $52^{\circ}$ , and the highest  $85^{\circ}$ ; the average was about  $71^{\circ}$ .



lock. Mattresses were too bulky, and we took instead of them a carpet and coverlet for each, rolled in a piece of painted canvass that served to defend them from the rain by day, and answered for a floor, when our lot was to lie on the ground at night. An ample Turkish pelisse in our valises, lined throughout with *chilkufa*, the fur of the Caucasian fox, was at hand to impart its abundant stock of warmth by day or by night, as we might need it. Four copper pans, fitted to each other and fastened together by bars of the same metal, a mill, pot, and cups, for grinding, making, and drinking coffee, with a knife, fork, and spoon for each, and a copper drinking cup, were our utensils for cooking and eating. A circular piece of leather, with iron rings attached to its circumference, and a chain with a hook passing through them, and named a *süfreh*, served, when open and spread upon the ground as a table, and, when drawn up and suspended to a horse, as a bag to carry our bread and cheese. The whole, embracing our clothing, bedding, and table and kitchen furniture, was comprised in a compass that enabled us to carry it, on ordinary occasions, with only one extra horse; so unsparingly did we lop off civilization's factitious additions to the necessaries of life, in order, by travelling as nearly as possible in the style of the country, to proceed expeditiously, economically, and with few allurements for robbers. As the Turkish post furnishes only naked horses, we were obliged to add saddles and bridles to our other accoutrements. To our saddle-bow we attached pistols, to answer their usual object in this country, to make the timid appear bold and formidable. For own snug dress were substituted the loose robes of the Turk, the European hat was exchanged for the oriental turban, and our feet were encased in the enormous stockings and boots of the Tartar; such an accommodation to the prejudices of the country being deemed expedient, in order to avoid unnecessary notice, expense, and trouble, if not insult.—With these preparations we found ourselves completely equipped for a tour in Turkey.

Mr. Rhind, to whom we were already indebted for procuring us *fermáns* and *tézkerehs* (government and custom-house passports) for travelling in Turkey, and passports for entering Russia; and our countryman Mr. Walley, who, in addition to many other favours, had obligingly offered to act as our agent during our absence, completed their kind attentions by accompanying us to Scútari, and bidding us farewell as we mounted our horses.





It was a moment of sadness. How many must be our fatigues, anxieties, perhaps sicknesses, before seeing again the face of a countryman and a friend! Could we even expect that both would escape with life the perils from sickly climates and pestilence, in the wilderness, in the city, and in the sea, among robbers and false brethren that awaited us? I had commenced the enterprise with a strong presentiment of never surviving to revisit my friends, which was but imperfectly allayed by reflecting upon the uniform protection of Providence in former journeys. In my companion, a similar feeling was enhanced by unacquaintance with the country and its people, and greater freshness and intimacy of attachment to friends left behind. But neither of us did it lead to a moment's despondency or wavering of resolution, for we doubted not that Providence had led us into the path we were pursuing, nor that our object was worth all that we were risking for it; and we were cheered by throwing ourselves simply upon God's parental protection.

It was 10 A.M. when we started, and though the clouds were dropping a slight shower of rain, we were still grateful that they kindly sheltered us from the sun. Our route for the day skirted the shore of the Sea of Mármora, with the Prince's Islands in sight, and lay across an undulating tract of country variegated with fields of grain, vineyards, and fruit trees. At Bostánjy bridge, two hours from Scútari, our tézkereh was carefully examined and countersigned. Leaving Máltepeh to the right, we passed through the miserable villages of Kartál and Pendík, and reached Gébizeh, the ancient Lybissa, at 6 P.M. where we stopped for the night. It seemed larger than any village we had passed, but as the menzilháneh was near one extremity, we saw little of it. For so fatigued were we by our first day's ride, though only 9 hours\*, that, instead of making inquiries, we speedily threw ourselves upon the floor to sleep, not allowing even the fleas, which always swarm in a Turkish post-house, to interrupt our repose. You will perhaps accuse us of something more than fatigue, when I confess, that not even the mound which covers the ashes of the great Hannibal at this place, attracted our attention.

\* The hour by which the stages of the Turkish post, and, in fact, all distances in Turkey are measured, is, an hour's march of a caravan; and though it of course varies according to the nature of the ground, may be estimated at an average of three miles, or just an English league. The length of stages mentioned between this and Erzroom is not the time we were travelling them, nor our own estimate, but that which is fixed by government.

May 22. We started at half past 4 A.M., and crossing a considerable tract, with soil and scenery much like that of yesterday, except that the sea was not in sight, we came down at length, through orchards of cherry trees whose fruit was just beginning to ripen, upon the shore of the Gulf of Nicomedia. Although the shore and the declivity of the swelling hills which rise up from it, seemed susceptible of the highest cultivation, we passed no village before reaching the town, 9 hours from our night's lodgings. We noticed yesterday frequent flocks of sheep moving slowly towards the capital; and to-day the road was absolutely obstructed by thousands and thousands of them. They came from the immense pastures of Armenia, and were attended by their Kùrdish shepherds.

Isnikmíd (frequently pronounced Isnimíd), the Turkish representative of Nicomedia\*, is beautifully situated on the declivity of a hill sloping down to the north-east corner of the gulf to which it gives its name. Several brigs and *kayiks* (boats) beating towards it in that direction, and wooded mountains, verdant hills, and fertile plains on every other side, combined charms of marine and rural scenery, worthy the capital of Bithynia and the favourite residence of the imperial Diocletian. Many of its houses are of imposing height and showy form, as if still ambitious of its former magnificence, but their frail structure and decayed state betray its real degradation. It contains about 25,000 inhabitants, divided in the proportions of 4000 Turkish, 500 Armenian, and 500 Greek and Jewish houses.

Our next stage, from Isnikmíd to Sábanjah, a distance of 6 hours, led us eastward through the plain that extends up from the head of the gulf. Its alluvial soil is damp, but extremely fertile, verdant swelling hills bound it on the left, and a regular mountain range, clothed throughout with a thick and unbroken forest, stretches along on the right. Cultivation ceased as we advanced, and our solitary path led us through thickets of trees and shrubs of almost tropical luxuriance, the freshness of whose fragrance, with the coolness of approaching evening, and the music of birds, quite

† It is curious to see how modern names used by the Turks, betray their ignorance of the languages of the people they conquered. The name by which the Greeks now commonly call Constantinople, is ἡ πόλις (the city), by way of distinction. When going thither they say εἰς τὴν πόλιν, and this expression, pronounced by them *is-tim-bolin*, the Turks have converted into Istamboul. In the same way Isnikmíd is derived from εἰς Νικομήδειαν and Isnik from εἰς Νίκαιαν.





made us forget the fatigue of a day's ride of 45 miles. Our was soon interrupted by a scene as comic as the spot was charming. It was a procession conducting a Turkish bride from some neighbouring village to her spouse in the one which we were approaching. She and her veiled companions of every age, were stowed in six covered carts, so narrow, as barely to accommodate them, as they sat, tailor-like, upon the bottom, facing, alternately, the right and the left. They were drawn by buffaloes, to whose yokes were attached standards ornamented with flying handkerchiefs of every colour, as if to add comeliness and gaiety to the most ungainly of beasts. By their side walked armed men and musicians, to announce, by their guns, and the music of squeaking pipes and coarse drums, what otherwise would certainly not have been expressed, the joy of the occasion.—We reached Sábanjah at half past 7 P.M. It is a common village, on the margin of a lake of fresh water at the foot of the mountain just mentioned, and contains 150 Turkish, with 25 Armenian, and 15 Greek houses.

May 23. The lake of Sábanjah is some 3 or 4 miles in breadth, and washes the foot of the mountain, so that we could avoid ascending the latter, only by wading some distance in the water. In it buffaloes were bathing, with little beside the mouth and nostrils projecting above the surface. So essential is water to these animals, that their drivers are sometimes seen throwing it upon them from brooks that are too small to allow them to bathe. They are larger and stronger than common cattle, of a dull slate colour, almost destitute of hair, with projecting shoulders and hip bones, and ugly in form and temper. In Egypt, the Bukaa of Mount Lebanon, Asia Minor and Georgia, the buffalo is almost as much used as the common ox. To one who is acquainted with its aquatic propensities, Pharaoh's dream of the kine *coming up out of the river*, Gen. xli. 2, 3, seems perfectly natural. After leaving the lake, a ride of two hours and a half across an alluvial plain like that of yesterday, of which it is in fact a continuation, conducted us to the muddy Sakhária (Sangarius or Sagarius), which we crossed by a temporary wooden bridge. Beyond it, the plain retained the same features for some distance, but at length became a marsh, through which we were conducted by a long causeway of logs, precisely similar to the *corduroys* of some parts of our own country. Three hours from the river, we reached a dry and more undulating tract, but hardly any cultivation appeared the whole day, and most



of the country was grown over with trees and thickets, in which the beech and the walnut predominated.

We found our post-house at Khandék, 10 hours from Sábanjah. The village is surrounded by a grove, or rather forest, of spreading trees, in which its houses, except a few in the centre, are scattered, each in its separate enclosure, so as to be almost entirely concealed. Streams of water ran through most of its streets, to the great increase, according to Turkish taste, of its beauty, but, according to ours, of its filth. It contains about 200 houses, all inhabited by Turks. The horses in the post-house were too miserable to be used, and the aga of the village, at the request of our tartar, pressed others from the inhabitants for our service. It was so late, however, before they came, that he determined not to leave till morning, and was consequently obliged to restore them to their owners, who claimed them for to-morrow's labour.

We rejoiced at this detention, as it enabled us to steal an hour's quiet retirement in the woods for meditation. Sitting down under a spreading walnut, by the side of a murmuring mill-stream, I was led by the charming woodland scenery around, to reflect upon that mysterious Providence, by which so beautiful a country has been placed under such a blighting government, and in the hands of so indolent and barbarous a people. By the industry and cultivation of our own countrymen, it would be made "even as the garden of the Lord." Surely the religion of the false prophet, by being allowed to spread over such fair portions of the globe, has been placed in the most advantageous circumstances to meliorate the temporal condition of man if such be its tendency. The result is found in fertile regions depopulated and run to waste, and people surrounded by nature's richest gifts, debased and destitute of the comforts of civilized life. Could God have taken a better method of shewing to the world, that the religion is false and a curse to man? Scepticism itself must now admit the conclusion.

*May 24.* Our morning's stage was 10 hours. For the first four, we rode over a broken tract of the richest soil, covered with a thick growth of beech, maple, oak, and other forest trees, that, overshadowing the road, transported me in imagination to the recently settled parts of the United States, and in one place a cultivated field covered with *girdled* trees, quite completed the deception. My companion was strongly reminded by the whole aspect of the country, of the Western part of New York, a region en-



deared to him, not only by its fertility and beauty, but also by the tender associations of home. The trees became less thick as we advanced, and in an hour and a half more, crossing the great Melán, here running northward, we entered an extensive and most fertile alluvial plain, partially cultivated, and thinly shaded with large white walnuts. The hollow trunk of one of them was the house of a Turkish saint. By having a fire always ready to light the pipe, and a jug of water to quench the thirst of the traveller, and by his comic singing and gestures plainly indicative of lunacy or foolishness, he obtained in charity sufficient to sustain a life to which the Turks attach an idea of great sanctity. I was surprised to see our tartar, as a salutation, seize him rudely by the beard, but he immediately drew it to his mouth, and by kissing it, turned what otherwise would have been the most intolerable of insults, into an act of the greatest veneration. Although the mountain range which had continued on the right from Isnikmíd, here exhibited upon its top some drifts of snow, this low plain, under the rays of the sun, from which, until to-day, the clouds had shielded us, was excessively hot; and we were not sorry to be detained at the post-house for horses some five or six hours in the heat of the day.

Dootjeh, where we stopped, is a Turkish village of about 200 houses, much scattered, and containing some hewn stones and broken columns indicative of the site of ancient buildings. The plain extends to the foot of a mountain about two hours and a half beyond. Thus far from Isnikmíd, carts drawn by buffaloes, here much more numerous than the common ox, were constantly passing to and fro, transporting timber toward the capital. A few rice fields attracted our attention as we approached the extremity of the plain. At half past 7 P.M. as the shadows of night came on, we entered a defile of the mountain, and were conducted for more than two hours up a continual and difficult ascent. The thick boughs of the forest overhanging the path, made the darkness intense, and put our eyes in constant jeopardy, while the broken pavement of the road, and the narrow bridges by which we repeatedly crossed a mountain torrent, exposed us to frequent falls and bruises. One horse gave out and refused to stir, and all were extremely fatigued. At the top we found a rough police guard, in a dirty old *derbénd* (guard-house), sleeping and smoking by a blazing fire. Placing ourselves around it, we enjoyed its cheering



influence for an hour, while our sürijies were catching a horse from a neighbouring pasture to supply the place of the one that had failed. Gradually descending hence over an open and apparently arable tract, we reached Boly two hours and a half after midnight, having accomplished 10 hours from Dootjeh, and 60 miles since the morning. Fatigued and sleepy, and chilled with the change of climate and the dampness of the night, we wrapped our pelisses around us, and lay down to rest upon the floor of the post-house.

*May 25.* Boly represents the ancient Hadrianopolis, which was celebrated for its warm baths. They still exist, but are several miles distant. It contains about 800 Turkish houses, and a distinct suburb is inhabited by about 40 families of Armenians. A Turkish bath in the morning relieved us of three evils unavoidable in our mode of travelling, viz. soreness, dirt, and vermin, and by a quarter past 9 A.M. we were in good order for proceeding. The excellent horses of this post were only two hours and a quarter in carrying us over the plain of Boly. The rays of the sun, though they shone through an unclouded sky, rather cheered than oppressed us; and this, with the banks of snow on the mountains around, testified to the elevation of the spot. The plain itself is undulating and well watered, and being almost entirely under cultivation, and animated with frequent villages, presented a beautiful prospect. We found no tract so fully cultivated in the whole extent of Asia Minor. Even the hills beyond partook of the same feature, and had some villages among them. Here we traced a limpid streamlet to its source, and recognized the alder upon its banks, though, unlike our own, it grew to the size of an apple tree, with a trunk nearly a foot and a half in diameter. At a derbënd, which answered as a half-way house, we rested a moment, and devoured a roasted lamb with which our tartar had providently stocked our süfreh at Boly. The latter half of our ride was over a hilly country that had little to interest us, and we reached our post-house at Gérideh, 12 hours from Boly, at half past 5 P.M.

The coolness of the air that had braced and cheered us in the afternoon, increased to chillness in the evening, and made a close room and fire acceptable. The paper windows of the menzilháneh helped us to one, and a pot of coals in our enclosure furnished us with the other. I noticed, as an evidence of the coldness of the climate, that every enclosure had a spot in the centre fitted for this convenience; in fact, we were assured that the snow





falls several feet deep in winter, and observed, that some of it was still lying upon the mountains but a little above us. Gérideh, a corruption of Gratia, one of its ancient names, is a market town of about 200 Turkish houses, built of hewed logs, in the best backwoods style of the United States.

Our tartar seemed to be on good terms with the *menziljy* (post-master), and, as they sat drinking their *arak* (brandy) before all the comers and goers of the inn, he expressed his surprise that we did not allow ourselves the same indulgence. We explained our reason, but at the same time mentioned that we had fewer objections against the use of common wine with our meals. Contrary to our expectation, in a town entirely Turkish, wine was offered us; though while brandy was drunk so openly, the wine was brought carefully concealed under a cloak. This was the only place between Isnikmíd and Marsován where we found wine, and between Niksár and Erzroom we found none, though we might probably have obtained *arak* in almost every place. The reason is, that Turks much more readily drink the latter than the former, perhaps, because the prohibition of wine in the Korán is express, while that of distilled liquors is only implied.\* Often have they directly or indirectly solicited me for brandy, but for wine never. Both the tartar we took from Smyrna, and the one that conducted us to Erzroom, were hardened drinkers, and they were doubtless disappointed that we did not help them to the forbidden dram. Unfortunately in the one case a Greek, and in the other an Armenian fellow traveller, carried bottles in their pockets. It is a disgrace to foreign, as well as native Christians in this country, that they so readily become panders to this appetite of the Turks, and help them to break a really commendable precept of their religion.

May 26. We lay down with the intention of starting at midnight, but soon a cry of robbers called the inhabitants to their arms, and it proved that some of the post-horses were stolen. The accident detained us till 3 and a quarter A.M. Starting then, we found the country hilly, little cultivated, and less fertile than hitherto, till we came down to a little valley upon one of the branches of the Parthenius. In it were two small villages, the

\* "They ask you," says the Korán, "respecting wine and the *meiser* [a game of chance]. Say that in them is great wickedness, and advantages to men; but their wickedness is greater than their advantages." (Sooret-el-bokarah.) "O ye that have believed! wine, and the *meiser* \* \* \* \* are an abomination of the work of Satan." (Id. Sooret-el-maideh). "From the fruit of palms and grapes ye obtain intoxicating liquor (*seker*) and good nutriment; in this there is a sign to people of understanding." Id. Sooret-el-nahl.

second of which is called Hamamly. Here, 7 hours from Gériden, we breakfasted and changed horses. Then crossing the river by a bridge, we ascended a mountain, and concluded that we had fairly entered Paphlagonia.

At Cherkésh, a small village which we reached at 1 and a quarter P.M. we rested half an hour. It was crowded with people attending a fair, which passes around the several villages of the district in rotation. In the crowd were two dervishes, who exhibited before us the common trick of driving a bodkin through the cheek and into the throat, but they proved themselves no great adepts at legerdemain. The remainder of our day's ride was over a regularly undulating table-land, without a shrub, and with little grass, but sowed in spots with grain. The coolness of the air, and the patches of snow on the swelling hills that bound it on the right, proved its elevation not to be small. Our horses galloped over it at a rapid rate, and at 4 and a half P.M. we reached the post-house at the little village of Karajalár, 8 hours from Hamamly.

We now *travel tartar* in fine style, and I must invite you to look at us, as we move over these naked plains. Two horses, the first led by a süriyy upon a separate animal, and the second tied by his halter to the tail of his companion, carry our baggage. Our tartar, with a *kalpák* (cap) of black lambskin upon his head, some twelve or fifteen inches in length, looking much like a stove-pipe with a yellow cushion stuffed into its upper extremity, and a heavy kumchy in his hand to give force to his frequent exclamation of *haideh*, rides by their side. We, metamorphosed into Turks, with unshaven lip and turbaned head, bring up the rear. Every stage, often thirty miles or more, is travelled without allowing our horses a drop of water, and our gait is frequently a rapid gallop; in enduring which, the loaded animals especially exhibit a strength and hardiness that quite astonish us. Besides the smart of the tartar's lash, the weight of their load, and the swiftness of their gait, they are subject to many cruel accidents. A false step in such rapid travelling often causes one to stumble, and the other, tied as he is to him, is most ungently and unceremoniously arrested; or if the ground is hilly, one sometimes rolls down a declivity, and drags his companion reluctantly after him. Their motion is so great, that, snugly as our baggage is packed, not a stage is passed without its turning more than once, so as to bring the girt, sustaining the whole weight of the load, suddenly across the poor





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animal's back, often already completely excoriated by the chafing of the saddle. Such accidents being frequently the fault of the *sürüjy*, are apt to bring him into a quarrel with the tartar, in which we have more than once seen the *yataghan*, instead of the *kumchy*, applied to his back.

At *Karajalár*, the deception of our tartar, which we had already suspected, was fully developed. We had hired him at Constantinople, as we supposed, for ourselves alone; and although an Armenian had joined us at *Scútari*, and two others at *Sábanjah*, we were not sure that any thing was wrong. But here we overtook two Turkish merchants, with three heavily laden horses and two *sürüjies*, equally with ourselves under his convoy, so that we were actually a minority of the party. The reason why the post-houses had been found so often destitute of horses, or furnished with only bad ones, was now explained, for the tartar had drained them by keeping this company just before us. With this addition, and embracing a second tartar as an accidental companion, our caravan now consisted of nineteen horses, more than most post-houses could be expected to contain. It was but a specimen of the double dealing, however, to which one soon becomes accustomed as an every-day occurrence in Turkey, and reflecting that our contract was really cheaper than the tartar could afford without additional profit from the rest of the company, we determined not to complain, so long as we did not suffer for good horses or lodgings.

Beyond *Karajalár* the same table-land continued, and our party moved over it, often nineteen abreast, upon an almost unbroken gallop for three hours to *Karajülén*, where we stopped at 7 P.M. Had you seen us, loaded horses and all, bounding over the plain as if for a wager, the scene would have amused you; unless perchance pity for the poor animals had produced an opposite impression. We should ourselves have dealt more mercifully with the poor beasts, and in fact with their riders, had we been our own masters. But, with a level road and good horses, the irresistible tendency of a tartar is onward; and our Mohammed aga had no moderate share of the propensity of his profession. Having as usual anticipated us a little, he awaited our arrival at the post-house, and, as we drove up in good spirits after a ride of at least 60 miles since the morning, exclaimed to his friends, *el hamd lillah aushdular* (thank God they have got used to it), highly gratified by such a



proof that we were now able to push on as fast as he wished. This place contains about 200 houses, all Turkish.

*May 27.* After passing, for two hours and a half, over a tract more broken than the plain of yesterday, we came upon a small tributary of the Halys, called the Derin-göz, which we followed, sometimes upon its banks and sometimes at a distance, the remainder of the day. Besides several villages upon its southern side, and a few trees, now become a rarity, I noticed nothing till we reached Kojhisár, which completed a stage of 8 hours. It was a Turkish town of about 200 houses. Its shops afforded us eggs for about two cents a dozen, and bread was proportionally cheap.

We were now at our nearest approach to Angora, a place interesting to the merchant for its celebrated manufacture of goat's hair camlet (*Angora shaly*), and to the missionary for its numerous and wealthy papal Armenian population. A beautiful specimen of the cloth, manufactured at this village, was shewed us, and in the vicinity we saw some of the animals from the hair of which it is made; but we heard of no Christians of any name between Boly and Tósia.

On starting again we found the most luxuriant vegetation on the river, and our road for some distance was hedged with roses. Exposed to the scorching rays of the sun in a temperature 98°, however, we enjoyed it but little; and soon the valley became narrow, and cedars were the only ornament of the hills that enclosed it. At the halfway house, an airy *köshk* (kiosk) over a jetting fountain afforded us a few minutes cool repose, and tempted us to a selfish admiration of that trait of the Turkish religion which leads to such acts of benevolence to the traveller. For several hundred miles on our present road, we could hardly travel far enough to become thirsty, without finding some fountain, a work of supposed meritorious charity by some devout Turk, inviting us to drink of its limpid jet. Proceeding, we noticed in the alluvial of the river many fields of rice, that offspring of heat and parent of sickness.

Our post-house was in Tósia, at the end of a stage of 10 hours. Crossing a rapid tributary of the Derin-göz by a covered bridge of stone, we entered it through luxuriant gardens and pretty summer-houses, extending from the southern base of a precipice, where it is situated, down a long declivity toward the river. Being, by its situation, advantageously exposed, it appears large, as in fact it is.



I counted fifteen or twenty minarets, and was told that it contained 3000 Turkish and 50 Greek houses. It has no Armenians. In this place only did we find any partisans of the janizaries. They were here predominant, and two or three persons had been recently killed in their broils. We subsequently learned that some time after we passed along, they were entirely suppressed.

*May 28.* As we descended the river, the rice fields continued along its banks, but the mountains around assumed a rugged and naked aspect. We crossed to its right bank by a ford, in the course of the morning, and five hours and three quarters from Tósia, came to its junction with the Halys, at a point where that river, after coming down from the east, turns suddenly northward.\* Following up the southern bank of the latter stream, called very properly, from the colour of its muddy water, Kuzul Irmák (red river), we were led into a narrow valley shut in by precipitous mountains, and heated by the closeness of the air and the concentrated rays of the sun almost to the temperature of an oven. Though fainting to us, its atmosphere was proved to be congenial to vegetation, by the surprising luxuriance of the fruit trees and gardens which occupied it. Here, at the end of a stage of 8 hours, we found our post-house at the little walled town of Haji Hamzeh. A crowd of bearded dirty Turks were assembled at a fair, and, judging from their features, I should say that the temperature of the spot favoured the growth of human passions as much as of vegetation, for they certainly seemed the most ruffian-like multitude I ever saw. Even the children indicated the sinister influence of the presiding genius by hooting at us from the walls as we passed.

As we rode up the river, the mountains which closely hedge it in increased in height and ruggedness, affording, by caves and fastnesses in their precipitous fronts, retreats for robbers, from whom this pass is said never to be free. Three hours from Haji Hamzeh, the river washes for some distance the base of a precipice three or four hundred feet high, along the face of which, perhaps sixty or a hundred feet above the water, we had to climb a narrow path wrought out of the rock. As we entered it, Mohammed, who for some distance had taken care that we should not separate, mustered us in a solid column, and making the mountains echo with

\* Kinnear, in the map inserted in his *Travels in Asia Minor, Armenia, and Kúrdistán*, has mistaken these rivers one for the other.



his tartar cry, urged us forward with the assertion that this spot, on account of its danger, is in the mind of every traveller from the moment he leaves Constantinople. The singular advantages of the place, and the appearance of the people at the last town, every one of whom looked more like a robber than an honest man, argued that there was ground for apprehension, but we saw not a living being. The valley beyond spreads into a broader and more open plain, and we pursued a level road through it till 7 and half P.M. Then, crossing the river by an excellent bridge solidly constructed of hewn stone (said by Kinnear to be the work of Bajazet), we entered Osmanjúk, 8 hours from Haji Hamzeh. It is at the foot of an isolated rock on which is a ruined castle, and from its low situation and bad water, must be very unhealthy.

*May 29.* We started a quarter before one in the morning, and leaving the alluvial of the river to the right, found ourselves at daybreak riding through a hilly country. After many hair-breadth escapes from falling from my horse through drowsiness, we reached an old derbénd, where I threw myself upon the floor and was instantly asleep. Minutes of such sleep are worth hours in the soft bed of home. In this case they were few, however, for I was soon roused to eat a breakfast of butter and honey with a little bread, and then urged upon my horse again. After a short distance, we came to a mountain ridge at a point where a savage chasm between impending precipices, affords a passage through it to a foaming torrent on its way to the Halys. It was too narrow for a road, and with much fatigue to our animals, and an occasional misgiving of our own nerves, we climbed over the top along the brink of one of the precipices. Tracing for a while, on the opposite side, the small valley of the stream, here a quietly murmuring rivulet, we came out upon the plain of Marsován.

Our stage was 12 hours, and coming after a night of so little sleep, we reached the town with our patience quite exhausted at the seeming interminable extent of the plain. Its length, in the direction of our route, must be twenty or thirty miles, and its breadth, though less, is also very considerable. Its surface is prettily undulating, and though the soil is light and but little cultivated, it is watered with frequent springs, and several villages are scattered over it. It is difficult, in some cases, to settle definitely the boundaries of the ancient divisions of Asia Minor, and I can only say, that in the course of yesterday's ride we left Paphlagonia, probably





touched upon the borders of Galatia, and entered Pontus. At any rate, there can be no doubt that we are now fairly in the latter country. I cannot affirm the same of Armenia Minor, though the statistics of this place seem to say, that we are at least approaching it. Marsován occupies the site of the ancient Phazemon, from which it also evidently derives its name. Although not pretending to the dignity of a city, and having the form of only a village, we were credibly informed that it contains 5000 houses, of which 1000 are Armenian and the rest Turkish. From hence a post route branches off to Trebizond, probably by way of Samsoun, which cannot be very distant.

The excessive heat delayed us five or six hours in the middle of the day, and we did not start till a quarter after 5 P.M. The light of day left us before we reached the hills at the extremity of the plain; and some apprehension of robbers being felt by the company, our tartar, as was his custom on such occasions, rode out to examine every appearance of man or beast near the road. Once he chased an animal, which, but for its fleetness, I should have taken for a sheep, until he was out of sight, when one of his Turkish friends instantly started in pursuit. His anxiety was explained by his assuring us on his return, that it was not an animal but a spirit, an idea suggested probably by the previous conversation of the tartar, who, with the extreme credulity in supernatural appearances common among moslems, had been entertaining the company with accounts of ghostly lights that frequent this plain, and lead travellers astray by carrying them hither and thither, one of which had once made him wander here a whole night. At length we began to descend a mountain so steep that our horses could scarcely go down it, and so high that we were an hour in reaching the bottom. High precipices on each side appeared to close before us, and it seemed, in the darkness of night, as if we were descending into an immense natural funnel. Here, in the very bottom, we entered Amásia at 11 and a quarter P.M. Our last stage was 8 hours, making sixty miles since the morning, and we were not long in seeking repose in the open veranda of the post-house.

*May 30.* Daylight shewed, that the obscurity of night had deceived us in the form, though not in the grandeur, of this singular spot; for, instead of being a chasm without an outlet, it is, in the language of the geographer Strabo, who was born here, “ a

great and deep ravine through which runs the river Iris." The city is situated on both banks of the river, in the narrowest part, which it completely fills. Lofty precipices overhang it on either side, one of which, in front of our window, is formed by a distinct rock, crowned with the walls of an old fortress. In its perpendicular front appear several excavations like the cells of anchorites, respecting which tradition has preserved several fables not worth relating. The rays of the sun, concentrated by the surrounding precipices, create an excessive heat, which occasions fevers in the warm months; but an abundance of fruit and other productions originating from the same cause, give the place counterbalancing attractions, for which man in every part of the world is ready to expose his health and life. Whether Amásia has retained any relics of its regal times, except its name, we did not learn. It now has all the features of a common Turkish city, except that its houses are constructed rather better than is usual in this region. An excellent bridge connects the two divisions into which it is separated by the river. It contains 4000 Turkish, 600 Armenian, and 125 Greek houses. In passing through the bazár, we noticed piles of stones, which, on inquiry, proved to be salt. It is dug from a mine not far distant, and used in its native state.\* Among the principal productions of Amásia is silk, of which, we were assured, 24,000 okas are raised annually.†

For the sake of repose and retirement, while my companion was abroad, I spent most of the day in the elevated veranda of the post-house, and of course observed little besides the circumstances that occurred in its court-yard. Our companions, fatigued like ourselves, and lounging, smoking, or sleeping under the trees which overshadowed it, were its constant occupants. Tartars occasionally came, changed horses, smoked their nargeelies, and hastened on their way, saying, as usual, but little to others of their profession who were on the ground. They are the news-carriers of the country, and generally manufacture a new rumour for every town, which is eagerly caught up by the common people. But when they meet each other, from a mutual understanding of the art of story making, perhaps, they seem to have nothing to inquire or to relate, and a simple *salám* is often all they say. One, however,

\* Probably the same that Strabo speaks of in the district of Ximena, and which he suggests may have given the river Halys its name.

† The weight of the oka differs in different places. In Smyrna it is 2.78 lbs.





in this case, gave out a report that was true and important. He announced his approach by the peculiar cry, between a grunt and a whistle, which is the tartar's horn, as he nears a post-house, and entering the yard in full speed, dismounted, and seated himself upon a platform near the gate, as a signal for a nargeely, which was immediately brought. Not a word was said, but the hostlers saw that the horse had been driven to his very last effort, and instantly plunged a knife into his mouth to save his life. At length, after the nargeely was smoked, he let it be known that several thousand *delies* (old troops now disbanded) had assembled in rebellion, and were plundering the country around Sivás, the pashá of which had dispatched him with an order to the governor of Amásia to join him immediately with a thousand soldiers. Where were his dispatches I know not, but they were doubtless speedily and safely delivered, for although falsehood is more natural than truth to the mouth of a tartar, there is hardly so trusty a set of men in the world. They not only take the greatest care of papers committed to them, but thousands of dollars in the valise of a tartar, without a receipt or an obligation, is as safe, danger from robbers excepted, as in the vault of a bank.

At the close of the day a sufficient number of horses, the want of which had detained us since the morning, was obtained, and we continued on our way. On leaving the town, we passed an ancient building of an unusually venerable appearance, the front wall of which, surprisingly solid and thick, was entire in its ancient style, and formed a striking contrast to the coarseness and weakness of the other parts, which were of modern origin. It was doubtless an old church, which we were told in the course of the day, when inquiring for antiquities, had once been used by the Turks as a mosk, but was now shut up and deserted, because they found that they could not say their prayers in it! Our road led for some distance up the narrow valley of the river, being separated by a hedge of roses on the right, from the luxuriant gardens and fruit trees, principally the cherry, now loaded with its blushing fruit, which occupied its rich alluvial, and having on the left a perpendicular precipice, with the channel of an ancient aqueduct cut in the rock along its base. The precipice ceasing at length, we turned to the left from the river, and passing in our ascent through a sort of natural gateway, formed by two shelving rocks, so near, as but just to allow our loaded animals to pass, we emerged *superas ad*



*auras*. The coolness of the evening air at the top, revived us from the languor of the atmosphere of the city, which had been heated at midday to the temperature of 92° in the shade. As we descended again into a tolerably level tract, bounded on either side, at no great distance, by hills, the darkness of night closed our observations.

Our half-way house was, as usual, a *derbénd*, and by the time we reached it, an hour's rest by a fire, and a supper of eggs and yoghoort, with bread and butter and honey, were very acceptable. The civility of our host pleased us even more than his fire or his fare. The Turks, even to the lowest porter in the streets, systematically regard Christians, whether natives or Europeans, as inferior to themselves, universally refusing to enter their employ as servants, and making it almost an article of their religion, never to shew them respect by rising up in their presence.\* When ambassadors in Constantinople tolerate such ill-bred arrogance in their own janizaries, plain travellers like ourselves need expect nothing else than that, at almost every post-house, the dirtiest Turk should accommodate himself at the expense of our convenience; and that, by the landlord himself, the slightest attentions should be paid us with evident reluctance. Such treatment, besides all the inconvenience that attends it, is harassing to the individual and national feelings of every man, but to the Christian, who knows its true cause to lie, not in a disparagement of himself or his nation, but of his religion, and sees in every instance of it an exercise of contempt toward the holy faith that he loves, which has been practised so long as to have become an integral part of the national feelings and customs of a whole people, it is infinitely afflicting and grievous. It is chiefly this moslem arrogance that creates the necessity of such an attendant as a tartar, and the authority of ours generally exacted for us sufficient respect to prevent our suffering any serious inconvenience. Still it was so new and so grateful to have, in this wild country, and this dark and tedious night, a Turk, not only give us his own warm seat by the fire, but hasten to relieve our stiffened limbs of our cloaks and

\* Their pertinacity in this article of discourtesy was finely tested during the late Russian war, according to an account given us by an Armenian bishop who was with the army. When, after the battle of Soghanly-dagh, which decided the fate of Erzroom, the Russian general entered the tent of one of the Turkish pashás, though deserted by his own troops, conquered by the Russians, and plundered by the Cossacks, he refused to rise until absolutely ordered to do so. After the capture of Akhaltsikhe, Gen. Paskevich was obliged to issue a proclamation before he could obtain this mark of respect from those whom he had conquered.



boots, and to meet every want as soon as expressed, that I cannot but record it to his praise. We readily gave him double the usual present as he helped us to our horses, and then left him under a shower of his prayers for the prosperity of our journey. He had learned his politeness by once residing in the English palace at Constantinople.

About three hours more brought us to another derbënd. Its keeper was asleep within, and could with difficulty be awaked to make us a cup of coffee. But the guard was sitting around a large fire in the open air, the blaze of which, as it shone through the branches of the overshadowing forest, discovered a lofty gallows at hand, as proof, both that the vicinity is infested by robbers, and that they here find their punishment. Which reminds me to say, what I ought to have told you earlier, that the derbënds which I so often mention, are stations of police guards, appointed to defend uninhabited parts of the public roads from robbers. Being generally at a distance from villages, they serve also as places of refreshment to travellers. The name itself is a Turkish word that signifies a pass or defile. We found the assertion of Strabo, that the district of Amásia abounds in trees, true to-night, somewhat to our inconvenience. For it is not very comfortable to ride through a forest in thick darkness, with the constant apprehension that a straggling branch may find its way into one's face and eyes. Fortunately the high kalpák of our tartar, who went before us, was most happily formed for detecting such intruders; and whenever it encountered one, the cry *dal war* (there is a limb) from its owner, warned the company to avoid the danger.

The last two or three hours of our stage seemed of interminable length, for drowsiness came upon me like an armed man, and resistance was in vain. My utmost efforts could but just open my senses sufficiently to external objects to give my dreams a new starting point, before away they would fly, in spite of me, with all the velocity of their nature. If a nod, that disturbed my balance, again arrested them, it was but to allow them to start afresh from some new goal as speedily as before. Thus the velocity of dreams was mistaken in my imagination for our actual gait, and we seemed to have travelled hours, when we had really advanced but a few rods. At length, after daybreak, we ended our stage of 12 hours, at Toorkhál, and were instantly upon the bare floor of the post-house. I thought not of a bed, for I had been for some time



grudging the naked ground to the meanest animal that lay sleeping by the side of the road; and though the villagers had already begun to collect for their morning pipe and cup of coffee when we arrived, no company or noise disturbed my slumbers.

May 31. Toorkhál is situated in a plain at the foot of an isolated rock crowned with the remains of a fortress, and contains perhaps 150 miserable houses in a ruinous state. We stopped less than 3 hours, and then left for Tokát. It is 8 hours distant, and a plain, interrupted only by a few undulations and isolated hillocks, extends the whole way. The soil is gravelly and but little cultivated, though several villages were in sight; and, with the exception of an immense multitude of young locusts that were stripping the ground of its verdure, we noticed nothing to record.

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### LETTER III.

#### FROM TOKAT TO ERZROOM.

Situation of Tokát—Its manufactures and trade—Armenian churches and schools—Papal Armenians—Tomb of Martyn—Favourable spot for a mission—Sivás—Ruins of Comana—Niksár—A pastoral scene—Kötály—Köylisár—Kara-hisár—Hospitality of a menziljy—Fundukly-bel—Sheherán—Turkish post establishment—Chiftlik—Erzengán—Cross the boundary of Armenia—Kara-koolák—River Euphrates—Under-ground houses—New mode of travelling—Description of a stable—Russian authority only respected—Erganmazar—Preparation of fuel—Pretended Hospitality—First view of the Russians—A hot spring—Reach Erzroom.

DEAR SIR,

EXTENSIVE and luxuriant gardens, occupying the banks of the river in the vicinity of Tokát, and abounding with the pear, the peach, the cherry, and other fruit trees, that partially conceal by their foliage, numerous small, but neat country houses, made our approach to the city highly prepossessing. Crossing to the south side of the river, we found spreading walnuts overhanging the road, and, under their grateful shade, entered the town at mid-day, panting under the oppressive temperature of 100°.

The moslem *Corbán-báirám* (feast of sacrifice), when the pilgrims at Mecca complete their pilgrimage by offering sacrifices in the valley of Mina, occurred the day after we reached Tokát; and





our tartar, that he might keep the feast, and slay a lamb in token of participating in the ceremony, determined to stop two days. We were not dissatisfied with the arrangement, as it not only gave us time to repose, but allowed us to examine more minutely a city that has been pronounced the largest and most commercial in the interior of Asia Minor. And as we have now entered Armenia Minor, I may be allowed to give a more detailed report.

The ancient name of Tokát is supposed to have been Berisa. Under the lower empire it was called Eudocia, and the same name is given to it by the Armenian writers. That it is not on the site of Comana Pontica, as formerly supposed, is now quite certain. It is on the south side of the river, anciently called Iris, but now bearing the name of the city itself, and occupies a small valley, confined between a mountain on the east, a gentle hill on the south, and a perpendicular ragged rock with the ruins of a fortress upon its top, on the west. A great number of trees, either in clusters, or scattered singly among the houses, add much beauty to its external aspect. But, in general, we were disappointed in its appearance and size. It is unwall'd, and all the houses, even to that of the governor, are of unburnt bricks; and, if its streets are paved, as has been often mentioned in its praise, it is no more than can be said of most towns of any magnitude in Turkey. Still some of its edifices are of good size, and parts of it are tolerably neat for a Turkish city. It belongs to one of the sultanas, and its governor is not subject to the pashá of Sivás.

Its principal manufactures are copper, silk, and calicoes. The feast had stopped the operations of the copper foundery, but we got access to it through one of its officers. It is a small establishment, carried on entirely by hand, and simply designed to purify the copper that is extracted from the mines of Maaden near Diarbekr. By a singular order of government, if we may believe our informant, the metal is not allowed to be refined there nor elsewhere, but must be brought hither, a distance of more than 250 miles, to undergo the process. We saw many pigs of it in the foundery, looking almost as impure as the ore itself. When refined, the larger portion of it is carried elsewhere to be manufactured. A great number of shops here, however, were employed in making it into vessels and various other utensils. Silk, like copper, is not produced at Tokát, but is brought in a raw state from Amásia and other places, and is here manufactured into goods.







the whole number of Armenians in the city, that can read, at 500, besides perhaps 50 women.

In the estimated number of Armenians already stated, are included 80 papal Armenian families. They never had any church, were always obliged to pay their baptismal and other similar fees to the Armenian clergy, and the two priests who formerly ministered to them, were banished when their brethren were driven from Constantinople. Although few, their number embraces the wealthiest merchants, and it speaks loudly in their praise, that, before the event just mentioned, they had a female school.

The Greeks have one church, but we did not visit it, or them; nor did we have any intercourse with the Jews.

While at Tokát, we had the melancholy pleasure of visiting the tomb of the Rev. Henry Martyn, who died at this place in the year 1812, when on his way from Persia to England. His remains lie buried in the extensive cemetery of the Armenian church of Karasoon Manoog, and are covered by a monument, erected by Claudius James Rich, Esq. late English resident at Bagdad. An appropriate Latin inscription is all that distinguishes his tomb from the tombs of the Armenians who sleep by his side.\*

The name of the place where the lamented Martyn closed his short but distinguished career of earthly usefulness, is already familiar to the friends of missions, and that melancholy event has thrown around it no small degree of interest. In recommending it, therefore, as the best spot for a missionary station which we visited in Armenia Minor, we have not to introduce to notice a place entirely new. Besides its own Armenian population, which is not small, it has a convenient situation in reference to several other places that contain many of the same people. On the west are Marsován and Amásia, on the north-east Niksár, and on the south-east Sivás; embracing, together with Tokát itself, not far from 24,000 Armenians, within a circle extending, in the farthest direction, not more than eighty miles from this centre, without reckoning any that may be scattered in villages. Whether there are many thus located, we did not ascertain by inquiry; but we should expect to find them, in this their adopted country, not merely in the migratory and alien character of merchants and mechanics in cities, but in that of peasants cultivating the soil as if it was their nation's

\* For a copy of this inscription, and the few facts we were able to collect respecting his death, the reader is referred to the late Boston edition of his Memoirs.



home. In a word, Tokát is the spot to be chosen as a centre of operations for the Armenians of second Armenia, as Cesarea is, probably, for those of the First and Third Armenia, and Tarsus for those of Cilicia.

Whether its climate would prove to be salubrious is questionable. It is hot in summer, and in the warmest months intermittent fevers are not uncommon; but we were assured that there are not more than ten days in the year of a higher temperature than we experienced the day that we arrived, and that disease is very easily avoided by attending to one's diet and other common precautions. Whether the missionary would not at first find himself attracting an undesirable degree of curiosity, and have to put up with some insults, is also questionable. For the people are entirely unused to the residence of Europeans among them, and there would be no consular protection at hand. Still, the inhabitants of Tokát are not worse than those of other places in the interior of Turkey; and are we never to go any farther from the coast than a European's hat can be seen, or a consul's arm can reach? European society and protection are certainly desirable, and, other things being equal, those places where they can be enjoyed should be selected first. But when we come to consider them essentially necessary, we forget the high declaration, that "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes."

As Sivás, one of the places that would fall within the range of a missionary stationed at Tokát, does not lie in the route we are pursuing, I may be allowed to say a word respecting it here. Its name, when Mithridates made it his royal residence, was Cabira; the name of Sebaste was given to it by his conqueror; and this has been converted by Turkish ignorance into Sivás. It was regarded by the Armenians as the capital of second Armenia; and, as we have already seen, the Ardzroonian king Senekerim, in A.D. 1021, transferred his residence thither from Vasbooragán, with a large part of his subjects. His posterity became extinct in A.D. 1080\*; and the place soon fell into the hands of the Turks. When taken by Timoor, it contained, we are told, 120,000 inhabitants, nearly all of whom were massacred with the most barbarous cruelty.† Under the Ottoman government it has long been the capital of the pashalik of Room, and is now the residence of a pashá. It lies

\* Chamcheán, p. 5, c. 18.

† Ibid. p. 7, c. 1.



18 hours south-east of Tokát, and contains about 1800 families, among whom are no papists. In the village of Toorkán, however, an hour distant, that sect numbers about 100 families, who have a church openly. Their priests are in banishment like those of Tokát. Kinnear says Sivás is dirty and ill built, and its inhabitants are a coarse and rude people.

*June 3.* We left Tokát this morning at 8 o'clock, and, instead of re-crossing the river immediately, continued along its southern bank about two hours, in order to visit the ruins which are commonly called here old Tokát. They occupy both banks of the river, but principally the northern, and are all coarse and modern, except a few foundations. These bear marks of genuine antiquity, and I am inclined to believe the Armenian tradition which makes this the site of Comana. But the shrine of Bellona no longer creates here the luxury and profligacy of Corinth\*, nor do the remains, or even the tomb of Chrisostom, now attract hither the sympathies of Christians for that persecuted man.† Not a human being inhabits the spot, and a few uninteresting stones only distinguish it. Crossing the river here, we rode a few miles up its valley, which is fertile and considerably cultivated. Then turning to the left over a gentle eminence, we descended by the side of a noisy torrent, through a ravine thickly shaded with the oak, the beech, the plane, the maple, the box, the hazel, wild grape vines and roses, into the valley of Niksár. Though somewhat marshy, it is even more fertile and beautiful than the one we had left. We crossed it nearly at right angles, and passing the river of Niksár (the ancient Lycus), by a most bungling ferry-boat, we stopped at the town for the night, though but 9 hours from Tokát.

Niksár is but a corruption of Neocesarea, the town in Pontus which is known as the birth place of Gregory Thaumaturgus. It occupies a gentle eminence at the foot of a range of mountains which forms the northern boundary of the plain. A citadel with a strong wall and gates still standing, contains the bazárs and business, and forms the nucleus of the town; the deserted ruins of another fortress on a height above throw around it an air of antiquity; and forests of fig, pomegranate, pear, cherry, walnut, and

\* Strabo, lib. xii.

† This allusion takes for granted the accuracy of the local tradition; but I see no reason why Comana in Cappadocia may not have been the place of his death. Cucusus (now Gogison) was in its vicinity, and it is as probable that he passed through there as here, on his way to Pityus (now Pitsunda), in Colchis.



other fruit trees, concealing the houses of the main body of its inhabitants along the sloping declivity below, give to it rural charms of the very first order. High on the north hangs the mountain clothed with the foliage of an almost impenetrable forest; and spread out on the south lies the plain carpeted with the verdure of the smoothest meadow. A copious shower just after we stopped gave the highest finish of freshness and life to the whole. In a word, the scenery of Niksár, united with that of many other places in Pontus of a similar cast, has stamped upon my mind an impression of that country, that would need very little aid from monastic propensities, to induce me take up my residence with the shade of St. Basil in its beautiful forests. The town contains 600 Turkish, 120 Armenian, and 20 Greek houses, and in a distinct suburb are 40 Greek houses more.

*June 4.* Our road from Niksár led us directly to the top of the highest peak of the mountain that rises behind it. The fatigue of the ascent was forgotten in the charms which surrounded us. At first, small ravines, wooded with walnuts, wild cherries, and other trees, formed channels for murmuring rivulets that descended to water the town. Nearer the top, a forest of lofty beeches shaded a ground beautifully studded with a great variety of delicate flowers. The top itself rose bare above all trees and shrubbery, and the very greenness of the sward which covered it except where a drift of unmelted snow still lingered here and there, seemed only to give a finish to its baldness. From this elevated position, which it took us four hours to reach, we could look across the whole region of the Iris and its tributaries to the snow-capped mountains that bound it on the south. Sitting down by a spring to eat a morsel of bread, we basked with pleasure in the rays of the sun, now raising the thermometer to only 56°, though they had so recently scorched us in the valleys below with a temperature of 100°.

Descending through a grove of pines, which in the inverted position of their limbs seemed to bear marks of the weight of wintry sleet and snows, we came soon into an open and beautiful grazing country. Level meadows and swelling hills, covered with the finest sward, interspersed with here and there a woodland, and intersected with rivulets of the purest water, seemed to give reality to the poetical charms of pastoral life. As we approached the log village in which was our post-house, a grotesque group, with pipe and tambour, headed by one in the costume of a zany, came forth





to meet us, and imagination instantly seized them to complete the deception, by adding to the scene Pan and the Satyrs in actual life, engaged in their favorite amusement. Poetry soon became prose however, when, on entering the village, we found that the headman, being about to take to himself a wife, was keeping a feast of fifteen days, and these his musicians, hoping to add our present to his pay, had stopped a moment from celebrating his joys to welcome our arrival.

The village is named Kötály; it is 8 hours from Niksár. Its houses, which were few, were in the style of the best log architecture of the United States, except that they were covered with a flat terrace, which extended like a portico several feet in every direction from the body of the building. In one of these we were furnished with better accommodations than we had had since leaving Constantinople. Our room was well floored, and neatly ceiled throughout. A good fire-place, with jambs and hearth of hewn stone, and iron (unfortunately there was but on), a rare article of furniture in Turkey, was supplied with a cheerful fire. Our modest and civil host soon furnished us with a frugal supper, and for the consideration of twenty-three cents, provided a roasted lamb for to-morrow.—There are no Armenians in this vicinity, but a village not far distant has 30 Greek houses.

*June 5.* Apple and pear trees in blossom, gave to our morning's ride the charms of early spring; and an occasional glimpse of the snowy summits of the Janik mountains on our left, shewed that winter still reigned not far from us. Leaving the open grazing country, after three or four hours, and crossing a succession of exquisitely beautiful lawns enclosed in a grove of pines, we were conducted at length up the long and narrow dell of Baghursák-deresy, among juniper and barberry bushes, into a continuous and dense forest. The prospect that burst upon us, as we unexpectedly issued from it in the afternoon, arrested us immoveably by its indescribable grandeur. We were on the edge of the elevated plateau to which we had ascended yesterday. So far below as to be but indistinctly seen, the river of Niksár wound its course through a ravine whose sides were lofty mountains. We stood on the top of one of them. Opposite to us mountain rose above mountain with all the roughness of crag and precipice, till the summits of the farthest were whitened with wintry snows. Our stage was to end at the very bottom of the abyss. We worked our way without

danger, though not without fatigue, down to the brink of a perpendicular precipice about 100 feet directly over the town in which we were to stop. Here some caution was required to avoid the serious accident of being landed in our post-house sooner than we wished; but at last, after a descent of two hours and a half in all, we safely reached the bottom.

Köylisár, the town which we had found, is 12 hours from Kötály. Its name, which, as explained to us, is a contraction of *gökly-hísár*, and means heavenly fortress, is derived from an old fortress that towers almost in the heavens above it. It consists of 400 or 500 Turkish houses, all of which are hid among gardens of fruit trees. We had been told that we should find fruit here as plenty as in Amásia, but it proved to be only a proverbial saying to express extreme fertility. No species of fruit was yet ripe.

*June 6.* As we started this morning, Mohammed informed us, upon the authority of a tartar who had passed in the night five days from Constantinople, that an ambassador from our country had just been received with great honour at the capital; and added, as if it were news that would give us great pleasure, that the Sultán had granted us a king. From previous information, we understood, that our commissioners had finally signed the treaty. A few such wars as the last with Russia would do away the old idea, of which this language is a relic, and which is even now credited in many parts of Turkey, that every sovereign of Europe receives his crown from the Sultán.

For more than seven hours, we traced the course of the river up the profound ravine already described. The confined air, and concentrated rays of the sun, made us suffer again the heat of Amásia. Dark and threatening precipices overhanging us, seemed repeatedly, in the sudden turns of the valley, to close up every avenue, and prevent, by an adamantine barrier elevated to the clouds, the possibility of egress. Sometimes our path lay along the narrow but level margin of the river, which was occasionally cultivated with cotton. At others projecting buttresses of the mountain either crowded us quite into the water, or forced us to climb narrow and undefended foot-paths along their faces, from forty to sixty feet above it. In one of these perilous passages, a baggage horse stumbled and fell. A projecting rock just at that point providentially saved him, but in attempting to rise he threw from his back the





baggage of our Armenian attendant, and it was immediately hurried out of sight in the eddies of the swollen stream. Issuing at length from this frightful pass, we left the river to the right and came upon an open country, covered with a green sward, and surrounded by mountains white with snow. Our horses seemed to enjoy the change almost as much as ourselves, and passing rapidly over the hills, we soon reached Kara-hisár, distant from Köylisár 12 hours.

Kara-hisár is situated on high ground, at the foot of a dark precipitous rock crowned with a ruined fortress. In the town, according to one informant, there are 1000 Turkish, 550 Armenian, and 30 Greek houses, and in a village an hour distant, 500 Armenian and 70 Turkish houses; but another reversed the number of Turkish and Armenian houses in town, declared that there were no Greeks, and made the village consist of 500 Armenian and 50 Greek houses. They all, both houses and inhabitants, seemed miserably poor, and many of the streets were filled with dunghills. The *serásker* (generalissimo) of the eastern division of the Turkish army, who retreated hither before the Russians, was now living upon the inhabitants, and we could hardly find enough in the market for a scanty dinner. Much to our surprise, however, when the *siný* (a large copper tray used in Turkey for a table) was brought in, instead of the frugal articles we had given to be cooked, it was loaded with some of the best dishes of Turkey. Our wonder was increased by learning that our landlord would receive no pay for it, but had provided it as an act of gratuitous hospitality! To suspect a sinister motive for such kindness, seems ungrateful; but really we were quite as much surprised that a tavern-keeper should give us a meal gratis in Turkey, as we should have been in America; and I strongly suspect that our tartar, thinking we should more easily swallow, by the help of a good dinner, the advice he had persuaded our host to give us about going to Trebizond, paid him for it. According to his contract, he was to take us to Erzroom by way of that place, which would not only lengthen the journey six or seven days, but be inconsistent with his engagements to the others that were under his convoy. He had been for several days dwelling upon the dangers and difficulties of the road, and now the menziljy joined with him in painting them in the strongest language. We finally concluded to give up the excursion, not through

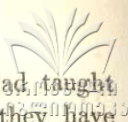


apprehension of danger, but because we were too fatigued to think of adding 200 miles to our journey, and were anxious to reach Erzroom before the Russians should leave.

There is a tolerably good road from here to the Black Sea, to the west of Trebizond, of only 24 hours. A post road also branches off here for Diarbekr. It leads by Arabkir and Maaden, and is 8 stages, averaging each 12 hours. In winter it is not unsafe.

*June 7.* From Kara-hisár we descended into a warm valley, occupied with gardens and fruit trees, and watered by a small tributary of the river of Niksár. A long ascent beyond, shewed us, even thus early, that our horses would not endure a continued ride of sixteen hours that intervened between the next post-house; and our tartar was dissuaded only by our Armenian companions from remedying the defect, by selecting some fresh ones from a drove that was passing. Though allowed to recruit an hour or two at mid-day in a tract of meadow land, they were unable to carry us through, and obliged us to spend the night in the deserted derbénd of Fundukly-bel, which we reached at 7 P.M. Not expecting to sleep out, we had taken only provisions enough in the morning for a lunch at noon, and those we shared with our companions, who had even started without their breakfast. Finding no village on the road, our tartar forcibly seized a lamb from a flock that we passed in the afternoon, but relinquished it at the request of the company, protesting, however, that he had a right to it, as such was the custom of the country. At last one of the sūrijies procured some bread and milk from a village three or four miles distant, and stayed our hunger. The spot, we afterwards learned, is a haunt for robbers, and a man was slain by them in the vicinity about the time we passed.—But a kind Providence caused us to sleep in safety.—This was the limit of the advance of the Russians to the west.

*June 8.* We started at 2 A.M., and chilled and benumbed with the cold proceeded on to Einék, which we reached at half past 5, having made yesterday and this morning only 16 hours. With the surrounding villages it forms a *sanják* (district) of the pashalik of Erzroom, called Sheherán. Together, they contain about 300 houses, all of which are Turkish, with the exception of some eight or ten inhabited by Greeks. Here, and onward in our journey, a marked improvement appeared in the civility and respectfulness of the Turkish population, notwithstanding their former reputation



for rudeness. Doubtless the sword of the Russians had taught them good manners. We readily believed them that they have snow six months in the year, for the thermometer this morning stood at  $41^{\circ} 30'$ ; and no trees for miles around, nor aught else appeared to break the chilling influence of vast fields of eternal snow that lay in full view upon the Giaoor-dagh, in the immediate vicinity on the north. For a more effectual defence from the frost, their houses were sunk under ground. It was our first introduction to this mode of architecture, and we afterwards hardly found any other. Sheherán is the last place mentioned in the journal of Martyn. How wearisome and painful must have been his journey of 170 miles over the mountains and valleys that intervene between here and Tokát, where his earthly toils ceased!

From this place a post road branches off for Trebizond; and there are but two stages to that city, one of 12 hours to Gümish-kháneh, and the other from thence of 24 hours. It was also from this vicinity, we were told, that the Russians penetrated through the mountains even to the boundaries of the pashalik of Trebizond, within 18 miles of the sea. These mountains are a branch of mount Caucasus. They first separate Mingreli from Georgia; in the pashalik of Akhaltsikhe they are called Childir-dagh, and give name to one of its sanjaks; then passing between Erzroom and the south-eastern corner of the Black Sea, they receive in this vicinity the name of Giaoor-dagh; and, extending westward, are finally named Janik-dagh to the north-west of Kara-hisár.

From hence the post establishment was completely broken up by the Russian invasion. In every post town in Turkey, a number of horses belonging to an individual or a company, are attached to the post-house, and at the command of any one who brings an order from government, and pays for them. The established price, when we went, was thirty parás, and, when we returned, one piastre the hour. The *menziljy* has under him a number of *sürrijies*, who act as hostlers, and, whenever horses are taken on a journey, accompany them to the next post to bring them back. Their name, which signifies a *puller*, is derived from the fact that a part of their business is to lead loaded horses. When the horses of the post are not sufficient, the traveller's *menzil-emry*, as the order for horses is called, obliges the authorities of the place to press into his service the horses of the inhabitants for the same price. As this system provides only for travelling, and not for the transporta-



tion of letters, it is imperfect, without the separate establishment of tartars, who are the official couriers. Some of them are attached to every pashá, and whoever will pay them what they demand, can employ them as an express. They are officers of considerable rank, and travellers by post generally take one to make themselves respected, and to expedite their journey. But here Ottoman establishments had ceased, the post-houses were stripped of their horses, the menzil-emry ceased to be regarded, and the tartar himself was no longer feared. By fair words and promises, however, he succeeded in getting horses enough at last, and we proceeded.

A gradual descent conducted us from the high undulating ground of Sheherán, into a broad and open plain, where we found our post-house in the little village of Gérmery, at the end of a stage of 6 hours. It is on a stream of some size, whose waters pass by Niksár, and which is probably the main branch of the river that bears that name. A number of villages appeared upon the plain, and we were assured that there are 60 in the sanják, containing in all not far from 1000 houses, none of which are inhabited by rayáhs. The sanják takes the name of Chiftlík, from the chief town about half an hour distant, which is called Kerkíd-chiftlík, or Bash-chiftlík, or simply Chiftlík.

*June 9.* Immediately after starting, we passed through the Chiftlík. Instead of a simple villa, as its name imports, it is a market town of some size. Situated on a low level of extreme fertility not far from the river, it is surrounded with gardens, and its houses, built of stone, stand out fair above the ground. Passing out of the plain along the banks of the river, we followed it until the fifth hour, from Gérmery, and then left it coming down from a snowy mountain at the south. Turning to the left ourselves, our tartar stopped us at the entrance of a wooded ravine, and loaded our pistols, saying, that there were four places between here and Erzroom dangerous for robbers, the first of which we were now entering. We worked our way, however, with no encounter, other than the steepness of the ascent, to the top of a naked summit, on which a snow-drift was still braving a summer's sun. Here the mountain just mentioned, was near, and in full view. It is called Chinán-dagh (verdant mountain). All the way from Niksár, the same range had occasionally appeared just south of the river. Here the river takes its origin from its extreme and most elevated part, confirming what Strabo says of the Lycus, that it rises in Armenia.





On the other side of the mountain is Erzengán, 12 hours from Gérmery. It was an important town of ancient Armenia proper, situated on the western bank of the Euphrates, at the confluence of the Kail with that river.\* Now it is the capital of a sanják of the same name, belonging to the pashalik of Erzroom. The pashá of Erzroom fled thither when the Russians took his capital, and was still there when we passed, having never been disturbed by the enemy.

In the little green valleys below us were a few black tents of Kürds, pasturing their flocks and herds. While hardly a traveller has preceded us without encountering Türk máns or Kürds throughout Asia Minor, these, at the very extremity of that country, are almost the first nomads of any kind we have seen encamped. Descending into one of these valleys, we stopped an hour, and dined upon a roasted lamb, in the open air, under a shower of rain. As we advanced, the valley opened into a broad plain, covered with luxuriant pasturage, except that here and there a few villagers were ploughing small fields of grain. In the midst of it, about 8 hours from Gérmery, the large village of Lori, the only one we saw, appeared upon it at some distance to the left, and we crossed a considerable stream running in that direction. It passes Baiboort, and empties into the Black Sea, and is, without doubt, the main branch of the Jorókh. So that the ridge which we had just crossed, separates the waters of the Iris and the Akampsis; and we may now consider ourselves within the boundary of Armenia proper. The scenery around is thoroughly Armenian; a mixture of fertility and bleakness; plains and hills clothed alike with the greenest sward, but not a tree or a shrub to adorn them. A green ridge, called Otlúk-bely, with now and then a snow-drift by the side of our path, succeeded. Here, directly in the road, and by the side of it, were several mineral springs issuing large quantities of gas, and depositing much yellow stony matter. One of them, in the valley of a little tributary of the Euphrates that rises here, had apparently raised a mound, by its deposits, nearly twenty-five feet in height. The water of all was without scent, and tasted much like the celebrated waters of Saratoga.

We stopped at Kara-koolák, 12 hours from Gérmery. At the first village in Armenia, it was very appropriate to be first introduced to almost the only accommodations the traveller finds in that

\* St. Martin, vol. i. p. 71.

country. We slept in a stable. Kara-koolák contains 40 or 50 houses, some 8 or 10 of which are inhabited by Armenians. In the neighbouring villages the Armenians are numerous, and in some there are no Turks. We had left to-day the waters of the Iris, crossed those of the Jorókh, and come upon those of the Euphrates, for a small stream runs by this place on its way to the latter river.

*June 10.* Two hours after starting we left the valley of Kara-koolák, and ascended a naked ridge, that afforded us a bleak and wintry prospect down upon an extensive mass of dark snowy mountains to the south-east. They were on the farther side of the Euphrates, in the district of Terján, an ancient canton of Armenia, and now a sanják of the pashalik of Erzroom. Its capital, we were told, is Keghe; and it contains two or three thousand Armenian families. The cold wind that whistled by us from that direction, hastened our descent, and at the end of the fourth hour, we crossed a ravine called *Sheitán-deresy* (devil's dell). Its appearance and reputation are almost equal to its name. At the crossing point three profound ravines converge and unite in one. Their sudden windings and high banks of shelving craggy rocks, would conceal an army in ambush till you were in its midst. And the difficulty of the path, which winds over rocks and loose stones up an almost perpendicular ascent on either side, would cut off the possibility of escape. It is the third of the four dangerous passes of which our tartar had warned us; and, as proof that his fears were not groundless, he pointed to his thumbless hand, which had been maimed here, fighting with robbers. We shall not be charged with unusual weakness of nerves, if we confess that we stopped but a moment to collect some curious minerals that lay in the path, and took but a hasty draught of the limpid stream that runs through its bottom.

We immediately came upon the northern branch of the Euphrates, and after riding two or three hours along its northern bank, stopped in a small meadow to bait our fatigued horses in the grass. This river was considered the proper Euphrates by the Greek and Roman writers, but the Armenians give that honour to the Murád-chai.\* It is here enclosed by uninteresting mountains, with only a few stunted cedars to cover their barren rocks. Not an inhabited house appears near it for more than thirty miles, and occasional tombs of travellers, one or two of whom were tartars,

\* St. Martin, vol. 1, p. 42.





that have been murdered by robbers, excite other emotions than one would wish to indulge when first coming upon so celebrated a river. While we were lounging under the trees of our meadow, a thunder storm passed over us, and by its tremendous peals echoing from mountain to mountain, added a terrible majesty to the already gloomy scene. The delay did not restore sufficient strength to our horses to enable them to carry us through our stage of 16 hours to Ash-kulaah. While still 4 hours from it, we found that they could proceed no farther. Night was near, it was pouring torrents of rain, we had not seen an inhabited house since we started in the morning, and did not know that there was one nearer than the post-house. Providentially a peasant informed us that we should find a village a little off the road to the left. By transferring our loads to the strongest horses, and leading the weakest, we succeeded in reaching it before night.

Our village consisted of 10 or 12 Turkish houses. Its name I did not record, but I retain a most distinct impression of our lodgings. It was concluded that we should be more comfortable in the house of an old gentleman and lady, than in the stable where the rest of our company lodged. A description of it will give you an idea of the underground houses of Armenia in general, except that this was one of the smallest and poorest. You have only to increase the number and size of the rooms, and you have a picture of the best, whether Turkish or Armenian. It was formed by digging into the side of a hill, so as completely to bury in it three of the walls, and leave only enough of the fourth exposed in front to admit of a doorway. Upon the terrace was thrown a mound of dirt that restored the hill almost to its original shape, and gave a front view resembling the burrow of some animal. Its walls were of rough round stones; its terrace was of unbewn branches of trees, blackened by being intentionally burnt to preserve them, or incidentally smoked by the daily fire; and its floor was the naked ground. It consisted of but one room, eighteen or twenty feet square, around which were scattered a variety of kitchen and dairy furniture. By the side of a post was a cheese pressing between two stones. A bag of yoghoort was suspended from a straggling stick that contributed to form the terrace. In another part hung a cylindrical churn some six feet long. In the centre a hole in the ground did, when heated, the service of an oven. In a corner stood two calves. Our aged host, having built a fire, and spread



for us carpets and cushions, straightened himself and ejaculated, *La illah illa Allah, Mohammed resool Allah* (there is no god but God, Mohammed is the apostle of God), in a tone that indicated some feeling of the vanity of the world. He left his house and all its stores entirely to us for the night, and thankful even for such lodgings we slept soundly.

*June 11.* In what way were we to proceed? We had been able to procure only a few fresh horses at G ermery, and at Karakool ak none; most of those which brought us here had come from Sheher an. They gave out yesterday, and one died on the road, so that we were obliged to dismiss them. In this village there were none. We resorted to the only expedient that offered, and took carts. Not the large well finished ox-carts of the United States. They would have been chariots. The body of these was a slight railing upon timbers attached to each other in the form of an acute triangle, with the base behind, and the apex at the yoke. The wheels were small and of solid planks, attached firmly to an axletree which turned with them. The yoke was a straight stick, and instead of bows, it had for each ox two sticks passing through it, and tied together under the neck by a string. A twisted cord of raw hide answered for a chain. In five such vehicles we stowed our baggage and ourselves, and started. Our old host owned the one we occupied, and fortunately he took his wife along as an aid; for the little beasts that drew us were so ill trained, that both of them, by going before and beating them, and holding back, could hardly prevent our being hurried headlong down the hills. There being no regular road, a cart would occasionally lose its equilibrium, and the body, only slightly attached to the axletree, be sent with its contents into the mud.

In order to change cattle often, we went from village to village at a distance from the public road, and thus saw more of the people. They seemed simple and well meaning, uniformly treated us with civility and respect, and exhibited none of the haughtiness of the Turk of Asia Minor. We could not resist the impression, however, that they were indolent; and they were, according to their own confession, ignorant. Only the mollah and one or two others in each village could read. Their houses were like that already described, except that many were larger. Instead of being admitted into the family room, however, we were uniformly shewed into the stable. I will describe one of them, and you must always imagine, without



being told, when we stop in a village hereafter, that our lodging place is like it. It is under ground like the houses, and perhaps connected by a door to the family room of its owner. In one corner is a chimney, and before it is a square enclosure separated from the rest of the stable by a low railing, and perhaps raised a step or two above it. Through the middle of this space, from the chimney to the entrance in front, an alley or passage of the width of the hearth, and defined by two parallel sticks laid upon the ground, separates it into two long divisions of the width of a bed. In these hay, or a mat, or a carpet, or perchance a mattress, is spread upon the ground for the accommodation of the occupants. The terrace is here raised above that of the rest of the stable, in the form of an arch, by means of hewn timbers, and a hole in it in front of the fire-place, from four to eight inches square, admits the only light that finds its way into the stable. Such is the better sort of these lodgings; in the poorer, one or another of the circumstances which distinguish the corner of the traveller from the accommodations of his beast, is wanting; while in the very best the division between them is so complete, as to make distinct rooms. At this season the cattle being at grass, they were empty and cleared of dung, so that we had no right to complain of their odour or filth.

Our tartar was now completely out of his element. His lash had little effect to quicken the pace of our dull beasts; and the peasant, under the wing of Russian rule, was not quite so regardful of his office and his *menzil-emry*, as the *menziljies* and *sürijies* of Asia Minor. In this predicament he would fain have induced us to assume a fictitious authority, to expedite our progress. He had, on the road, spread every variety of report respecting our object in travelling that entered his imagination; but his favorite one, to which the number of our party gave plausibility, was that we were *élichies* (ambassadors) going to make the Russians evacuate Erzroom. To prohibit such falsehoods was in vain, for his tongue was lawless, and we could not always counteract their effects. In Amásia our false and unassumed dignity actually, without our knowledge, protected an Armenian of the company from the charges of a tax-gatherer. We had hardly dismounted in Tokát, before two Armenians approached us with great reverence, and kissing our hands, begged the interposition of our diplomatic authority with the governor, to relieve them from the capitation tax. Encountering near Kara-hisár a party of Kürds, to whose



national predatory habits Russian authority was peculiarly obnoxious, Mohammed announced our pretended object, and ordered them to pray for our success, and then laughed at the old robbers, as they raised their hands and heartily entreated that our journey might be prosperous. But it was now no longer a jest. He seriously told us that his authority had ceased, and that it belonged to us, in the character he had given us, to force the people by threats and the lash to do as we wished. We, of course, could not countenance the imposition or the injustice, but were amused to find the face of things so changed by recent events, that in the heart of Turkey, we, as Europeans, had more authority over Turks themselves than one of their own tartars.

We passed four villages during the day, averaging 50 or 60 houses each, one of which was inhabited by Armenians; and at 12 o'clock at night forded a broad swollen stream that entered the bodies of our carts. On its farther bank, we stopped at the village of Erganmazar. Besides 20 Turkish houses, it contained 40 inhabited by Armenians, who had one church and one priest, but no school. The villages in the vicinity were also without schools; a few boys, we were told, are taught by the priests in the winter, but in the summer forget what they have learned. The departure of the Armenians for Georgia engrossed the conversation of every body yesterday and to-day. The Russians, wherever they have been, have taken a census of the Christian population, and now are carrying the greater part along with them into their own territories. The Armenians of this and a neighbouring village decided to go while we were here, being unwilling, as they said, to be left behind alone, and having some apprehension of revenge from the Turks after the Russians should have gone.

*June 12.* We entered, immediately after starting, upon the western extremity of the plain of Erzroom. Its surface was here undulating and soil dry; and the uncertainty of war and the presence of a hostile army, together with the removal of the Armenians, having discouraged agriculture, it was almost entirely uncultivated. Only here and there a small field appeared sown with wheat or barley, which was even now but just above the ground. The mountains around were, with the exception of frequent stripes of snow, some of which reached almost down to the plain, green with grass to their very summits; but being destitute entirely of tree or shrub, their aspect had no charms for us. The





plain too was **equally without trees** ; not a garden was **to be seen**, and built, as the **villages** were, under ground, very few of them appeared.

We changed **cattle** and dined at a moslem village near the Euphrates, and noticed the process of preparing the fuel of this woodless region. In the villages of yesterday the cow-dung was merely thrown from the stables, and by heaps and mire rendered the streets almost **impassable**. Here it was spread upon the dry ground, and stamped **hard** in a layer of three or four inches deep. Being left in this **state** until it becomes thoroughly dried in the sun, it is then cut **into cakes** of a convenient size, and is fit for the fire. This, with the exception of a few districts where there are trees, is the **fuel of all these** cold and wintry regions. With it ovens are heated and **food** is cooked ; and a pipe lighted with ignited cow-dung **relishes** as well to a native as if it derived its fire from the purest **coal**.

We found the **villagers** yesterday unwilling to fix any price to the food we ate ; and here our host absolutely refused to take any thing, under the **fair pretence** that what he had given us was an act of hospitality, **intimating**, however, that we might give his son some little memento of us if we chose. Our Armenian attendant, who generally settled our **bills**, took him at his word and paid him nothing. We all, however, soon understood this mode of dealing, for we found hardly **any other** till we were again beyond the pashalik of Erzroom on our return to Constantinople. By it your host would divest the **entertainment** of travellers of the servile appearance of a **money-making** business ; and, while he uses the language, would **appropriate** to himself the credit of the most generous hospitality. In reality, however, he intends his language as an appeal to your **own generosity**, and expects by it to obtain more money than if he **presented** a plain bill. Ask him how much he charges, and he is **offended** at the question ; the idea of remuneration had not **entered his head**. Give him less than he expects, and he is astonished that such a man as he had taken you to be, should think of **presenting** so small a sum, declares that he certainly is not the man to **receive** it, and lays it again at your feet.

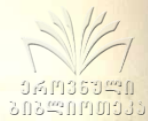
Three or four miles **from** the village we forded the Euphrates, where it was about **60 or 70** yards wide, and so shallow as not to enter the bodies of our **carts** ; and just at sunset reached the village of Uluja. Here we first overtook the rear-guard of the

Russian army; for their troops were now all assembled in the vicinity of Erzroom in preparation for their departure, and hitherto we had not seen a Russian. As we came in sight of them, our tartar, with scorn depicted in his face, and pointing at a throng assembled around a dram-shop with music and dancing, exclaimed, "There, look at the Roos, polluted race!" An open dram-shop, and public drunkenness, in the heart of Turkey! What an unhallowed invasion of the sober customs of the country! what a false and scandalous specimen of Christianity to be exhibited among its enemies! were the thoughts that passed through my mind. Still, I could not but recognise the scene as genuinely European, and I felt ashamed for the moment of my Frank blood. How long shall the indulgencies of the cup give us just occasion to blush before the followers of Mohammed?

The victorious arms of Russia made the Turk and the rayáh exchange ranks; and it was amusing to see our tartar, as he approached the first sentinel, take off his armour and put it upon one of our Armenian companions. So strong was his abhorrence of the invaders, that he would have persuaded us to sleep in the fields, rather than seek for lodgings in the village. To this, however, we would not consent, and sent a man to make us known to the commanding officer and solicit a room. In the mean time we examined the warm bath for which this place is celebrated. It is simply an uncovered wall enclosing a reservoir, from the bottom of which a copious fountain is constantly boiling up. The water is salt and bitter, and of the temperature of about 100°. Our messenger returned with information that, at the command of the officer, the *ayán* (headman) of the village had prepared us lodgings.

June 13. Ashamed to enter Erzroom in carts, our party procured a few horses this morning, and we reached the city in about two hours. The distance from Ash-kulaah, where we ought to have exchanged horses last, is 9 hours, making 262 hours, or about 786 miles from Constantinople.





## LETTER IV.

## ERZROOM, AND JOURNEY THENCE TO MEJENGERD.

The Russian invasion—Description of Erzroom—Its Armenian inhabitants—Their cemetery—School—Papal Armenians—Trade of Erzroom—A Khan—Turkish account of the emigration of the Armenians—Character of the Turks of Erzroom—Ignorance of America—The *gümrukjy*—A Turkish breakfast—Medical practice—Climate—A missionary effort—Leave Erzroom—*Alavár*—*Hassan-kúlah*—Appearance of the emigrating Armenians—The *Araxes*, and shepherd's bridge—Desolation caused by the emigration—Villages of Erzroom—Reasons assigned by the Armenians for their departure—Our reception at *Azáb*—Province of *Pásin*—*Mejengerd*.

DEAR SIR,

WE found Erzroom in the possession of the Russians, and the head quarters of their army. The history of their recent invasion I need not relate. Its extent we found to be very considerable. No parts of this pashalik escaped, except *Erzengán*, already mentioned, and *Ispír*, with a part of *Tortoom*, *sanjaks* in the mountains between *Akhalsikhe* and *Gümish-kháneh*. From *Sheherán*, 130 miles west of Erzroom, they marched to *Gümish-kháneh*, and thence pushed their advanced guard beyond the mountains, within 18 miles of *Trebizond*. The pashaliks of *Bayezeed*, *Kars*, and *Akhalsikhe* were entirely overrun. In fact, every spot in Turkish Armenia to which our journey led us, felt their ravages.

We sought an early interview with General *Pankratieff*, who commanded in the absence of Marshal *Paskevich*. He kindly warned us that the Turks were so enraged at the departure of the Armenians, as to render it unsafe for any European to remain after his troops should depart, which would be on the third day, and advised us to leave with them. We ventured, however, to confide in our own judgment, that a thorough chastisement rarely fails of humbling instead of irritating a Turk, and were not alarmed by his opinion. A Turkish officer, who sought our acquaintance, also expressed great astonishment at it, and offered us a guard, and a room in his own house, if we had any apprehension from the rabble. The emigration of the Armenians, however, in another way hastened our departure, by leaving us no inducement to remain. So unsettled, in fact, was the city, that to obtain much accurate information, was almost impossible. Still we did not





leave till five days after the Russians were gone, and most of our observations were made when their absence had left the city and us unembarrassed.

Erzroom is reputed to be the largest city and the bulwark of the Armenian possessions of Turkey. It is the capital of a pashalik, which is hardly exceeded in extent by any in the empire, and is the residence of a pashá, who bears the title of ser-ásker. Besides Erzroom, he commands also, according to the latest arrangement, the pashás of Bayezed and Gümish-kháneh, who have only the rank of two tails, and the former pashalik of Kars, which, since the war, is governed by only a mütsellim. It is situated near the foot of a mountain on the south-eastern side of the plain to which it gives its name, and at nearly equal distances from its eastern and western extremities. The plain, as seen from the city, appears of great extent, and is, in reality, not far from 40 miles long. Its surface, towards the west, is undulating and dry, but at the opposite extremity is lower, and occupied in part by marshes, which, in the spring, are frequented by great numbers of wild geese and ducks. Here the river Euphrates takes its rise, and running through the whole length of the plain, passes four or five miles north of the city.

The city was founded by a Grecian general, about A.D. 415, and named by him Theodosiopolis, after Theodosius the Second, his master. It was the strongest in the Armenian possessions of the empire. The Armenians called it Gárin, after the ancient canton of High Armenia, in which it was situated. Its present name appears to be of Arabic origin, and was borrowed from the great city of Ardzen, which stood not far to the east. As there was another Ardzen in their own section of Armenia, the Saracens distinguished this, which for a long time belonged to the Greeks, by the name of *Arzen-el-Room*, Ardzen of the Greeks. When Ardzen was destroyed with such slaughter by the Seljookians, its surviving inhabitants, its trade, and its name were transferred to this place. Hence, by contraction, we have the current name of Erzroom, written by the Armenians Arzroom.\*

Only the citadel, which occupies a low eminence within the city, is now fortified. A trench and two walls once surrounded it; but the inner wall only is now entire. It is solidly built of stone, and

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 66. Moses Choren. l. 3, c. 59. Abulfeda and Abulpharagius, as quoted in the geographical index of the Life of Saladin.



does not suffer in comparison with Turkish fortresses <sup>in general</sup>. Besides the bazárs, the principal mosks, and many private dwelling-houses, it formerly enclosed the palace of the pashá ; but that extensive building was demolished by the Russians. The houses, being built of dark stone, and generally of one story, have a cheerless and diminutive appearance. A green sward has grown over the terraces of dirt, by which, instead of roofs, they are all covered, and gives them, when viewed from an eminence above, almost as much the aspect of a meadow as of a city. Except now and then a poplar, the environs are as destitute of trees as are the mountains and the plains around, and hardly a garden adorns them.

The population of Erzroom, before the severe ravages of the plague a few years ago, was estimated at 100,000. At the time of the Russian invasion it contained, we were told, upon the authority of the collector of taxes, at our second visit, 11,733 Turkish, and 4645 Christian houses ; making a population of about 80,000 souls. Of the Christian inhabitants, 50 houses were Greeks, and 645 papal Armenians, leaving 3950 houses, or about 19,000 souls belonging to the proper Armenian church.

Nearly all the Christian population had left before we arrived, and the city was so unsettled, that I can do little more than give you a brief account of it as it was, reserving a description of its present state till our return. The Armenians were under the spiritual government of a bishop, whose diocese embraced the whole pashalik. His previous departure prevented our seeing him, but we received from others an interesting account of his character. He had a seminary for the education of candidates for the ministry, and would ordain none who had not enjoyed its advantages. It was probably small, and the studies not of a high order ; but the attempt, however humble, was of the highest importance. We had no opportunity of personal observation, as recent events had destroyed it. In all our inquiries, no other school of any kind, designed specially for the education of the Armenian clergy, has come to our knowledge. Though the Armenians were so numerous, and their city the largest in Armenia, it is a curious fact that they had but two churches. One of them was very small, and the other so irregular, dark, and mean, as to resemble a stable almost as much as an edifice for divine worship. The priests, however, were sufficiently numerous ; they amounted to 32. Not far from the city,



are four Armenian convents, each of which was inhabited by three or four vartabéds, and had funds enough for its support ; but all of them are now deserted.

In the extensive cemetery of the largest church, we first observed specimens of the singular monuments which distinguish most of the old burial places throughout Armenia. They are of stone, rudely carved in the form of a ram. The Armenians generally, even in Smyrna and Constantinople, are fond of engraving upon their tomb-stones symbols of the profession or trade of the deceased. A plough shews that he was a husbandman ; a pair of shears that he was a tailor ; an anvil and hammer indicate a blacksmith ; and a hammer, knife, and the sole of a shoe are the insignia of a shoemaker. Upon these there was a curious addition to such hieroglyphics. Most of them were marked with a table, a bottle, and a cup, and on one was a fiddle added to the group. I know not the design either of the shape of the monument, or of these highly incongruous symbols ; but probably in a pastoral country, the one may have been as indicative of rank, as a mounted horseman among a warlike people, and the other may be intended to tell posterity merely that the dust beneath once possessed in abundance the good things of this life. They were evidently ancient, and we searched for inscriptions to determine by what nation they were erected. There were letters on only one, and they belonged to the Armenian alphabet. Noticing the ground under the belly of another worn smooth, we inquired the reason, and were told, that if a child lives to a certain age without beginning to talk, it is passed between the legs of this monumental ram, and his tongue is loosed.

Owing to the patronage of the bishop, perhaps, the Armenian grammar school of Erzroom was unusually large and flourishing. Its principal was a layman, who had 5 or 6 assistants ; and it contained 500 or 600 scholars, divided into different departments, and studying all the common branches up to grammar and logic. To obtain a correct estimate of the number of persons in so large a city population that can read, is extremely difficult. It was stated to us as high as one half of the males, but, although the Armenians of Erzroom were doubtless more intelligent than those of any other part of Turkish Armenia, this proportion is evidently too large. We did not learn that the Armenian females of the city were ever blessed with a school ; yet some of them, we were assured, could read.





In looking at the present state of the *papal Armenians* of these regions, it is important not to lose sight of the former Jesuit missions, to which they owe their existence as a sect. Erzroom was the head-quarters of the Jesuits for Turkish Armenia, and was selected, not only for its size, but because its commerce drew thither persons of other and distant nations, who might also feel their influence. Through the agency of the French ambassador, they were furnished with strong *fermáns* of protection, and took up their residence there in A.D. 1688. The Armenian bishop himself was among their first converts. But soon, other Armenian ecclesiastics raised a persecution, in which one of the Jesuits was put in irons, the rest were banished, and many of their converts heavily fined. The ambassador's influence restored them to the field of their labours, and such success attended them, that early in the last century they were obliged to divide their mission into two branches. One bearing the name of St. Gregory the Illuminator, embraced Torzon (Tortoom?), Hassan-kúlaah, Kars, Bayezeed, Arabkice (Arabkir?), and 40 villages. The other, named after St. Ignatius, embraced Ispír, Baiboort, Akhaltsikhe, Trebizond, Gümish-kháneh, and 27 villages. Each town contained more than 1500 papists.\* The number of papal Armenians in Erzroom, when it capitulated to the Russians, has been already stated at 645 houses. Two other informants estimated them at 400, and an Armenian bishop at only 200 or 300 houses. They had no church; their baptisms, burial services, and most of their marriages, were performed by the Armenian clergy; and in apportioning taxes to the different sects, the government always included them among the Armenians. Their priests were banished at the time of the persecution of the papal Armenians in Constantinople. In the villages near Erzroom their number was small; a few were scattered here and there.

The Greeks were all gone, and we heard little of them, except that they were about 50 houses in number, and had one church.—The city had no Jewish inhabitants.

Erzroom was once the thoroughfare of most of the over-land commerce between Europe and the East, which was not destroyed by the discovery of the passage around the Cape of Good Hope. Recently it has been diminished by a variety of causes; and the freedom of trade granted by the Russian emperor to Georgia,

\* Letters Ed. et Cur. vol. 3, p. 450.



within the last ten years, has probably diverted a part of it into that channel. Still the amount of goods that now passes through Erzroom annually is not small. From the East are brought the shawls of Kashmeer and Persia, silk, cotton, tobacco, rice, indigo, madder, and a variety of drugs; and from the West, broadcloths, chintses, shawls, and cutlery. Little is seen of them, however, except at the custom-house, and in the khans. We solicited a list of the prices current from the first mercantile character in the place, and were assured, that it would be worth little, as almost every bale of goods passes unopened, and the articles bought and sold here are of small value. The same was true in the days of Tournefort, who was here when commerce was most flourishing; for he says, a patient might die for the want of a dose of rhubarb, although there were bales of it in the city. The appearance of the place accords with this state of trade. Now, indeed, the emigration of the Christians, who were its mechanics and tradesmen, had almost entirely stopped all local business. The hammer of the coppersmith, whose trade was once a leading manufacture, was silent; and a solitary Turkish merchant here and there, sat melancholy and silent in whole streets of shops closed and deserted. But the limited extent and meanness of its bazárs shew that its retail business could never have been large; while, to meet the wants of the carrying trade, its custom-house is an extensive establishment, and it has 36 khans, many of which are large and of a solid structure.

Khans in Turkey are the same as caraván-serais in Persia, and are buildings peculiarly adapted to the convenience of an over-land commerce; furnishing magazines for the goods, lodgings for the merchants, or whoever act as the supercargoes, and stables for the horses and muleteers of a caravan. They are generally quadrangular structures, consisting of a series of rooms that surround an uncovered court upon which they open, and having in the back part extensive stables. In the rooms the merchants stow their goods and themselves; the muleteers with their horses encamp under the open air in the court, or retire to the stable, as they choose; and the arched gateway, by which alone the court, and from it, the rooms, can be entered, being closed at night, all are as safe as in a prison. They are the only taverns which a Turkish city affords, and apprehending that, in the present disturbed state of the place, private lodgings could not be easily procured, we took up our abode





in one of them. It was substantially built of stone, and like the others in Erzroom, had its court covered by a terrace, as a defence from the rains and snows of this stormy climate. It had its *khanjiy* (landlord), with his *kakhia* (majordomo); a *kahwijy* (coffee-maker), with his coffee room, a sensible, though a Turkish, substitute for a bar-room with its keeper; and an *oda-bashy* (chamberlain) to attend, as a general servant, to the commands of all the inmates. Our room was entirely unfurnished, and being lighted, like many of the private houses, by only a paper sky-light in the terrace, was so dark, that we could with difficulty read or write. Food is never furnished in these establishments, and we hired ours cooked abroad and brought to us. Coffee, however, was always to be had at a moment's warning, and it being etiquette to give all visitors a cup, our coffee bill ran up fast. At the end of a week we found no less than 98 cups charged to us.

The Turks seemed deeply to regret the loss of their Armenian neighbours, and declared that their city was ruined; reflecting, doubtless, not only that Christian industry and enterprise had brought much trade and money to the place, but that they should no longer be relieved from the burden of taxes, by unequal exactions from the rayáhs. Feeling the reproof which their departure implied, they roundly asserted that they had always lived together in great harmony. Some said that the bishop, having extracted a large amount of money from the convents, took this occasion to flee from the punishment he had reason to apprehend from the patriarch, and by persuasion and threats had induced his people to accompany him. Others declared, that, while protected by the Russians, they had conducted themselves haughtily, worn armour, cursed the Turks and their religion, and now fled to avoid the consequences they had reason to apprehend. And others still affirmed that the Russians had frightened and forced them away. Many, we were assured, left debts unpaid; and one Turk, a tartar, applied to us for advice to enable him to recover an amount of nearly 10,000 piastres. He had paid it to an Armenian for a bill on a banker of Constantinople. The bill was not accepted, and he returned to demand his money. The Armenian was leaving for Georgia, and would not attend to it. The commanding general was applied to in vain, and on our return to Erzroom, he called to inform us, that he had preferred his claims in the court at Tifis, without success. The allegation of the Turks against the bishop



were confirmed by the Armenians, in so far, that some declared that it was by his strong advice that they were induced to go. The fact that he had, under Russian protection, baptized some Mohammedans, an offence which the Turkish law could not overlook, was undoubtedly an urgent reason for him to retire with the Russians. The influence of the clergy generally must also have been on the same side, for they could hardly have failed to be aware that their power would be increased by Russian laws.

Travellers have given to the Turks of Erzroom the name of being among the worst in Turkey; the Armenians universally declared to us the same thing; and the Persian agent affirmed that it was true. Our observation leads us to believe that they have improved under Russian chastisement. While their conquerors were present, the most perfect quietness prevailed. As soon as they were gone, and when it was expected that their vengeance would be felt by the Christians who remained, a crier passed through the streets proclaiming, by order of the pashá and Sultán, that if any should injure an Armenian, his goods would be confiscated, and his life be in danger. While we remained, the pashá did not arrive, and no sentry was to be seen in the city, nor any appearance of a re-established government. And still, not a town of New England is more free from every species of disturbance than was Erzroom.

As to their deportment toward us, instead of being insulted or injured, we were treated with decided attention. Indeed, we could not avoid the impression, that they were gratified, either at the confidence we reposed in them in remaining, or at seeing among them other Europeans besides the *Roos*. For no Franks were left in the city but ourselves, and any boy was physiognomist enough to perceive that we were not Russians. As we passed through the streets, many would say, "They don't belong to them" (the Russians), and some would affirm that we were English. When called to speak for ourselves, we found it difficult to make them comprehend who we were. As we were the first that had travelled in any part of Turkey, with fermáns as Americans, and probably the only Americans, who, under any name, had penetrated a hundred miles into the interior of Turkey eastward from Constantinople, it is hardly surprising that the Turks of Erzroom were ignorant of even the name of the western continent. They had heard of the existence of *Yengy Diünya* (the new world); but to tell them we came from thence, seemed rather to increase than diminish their



embarrassment; and as soon as they learned what was our language, the discussion generally ended by their being satisfied that we were English. We took pains, however, here, and in almost every place that we visited, to make known, not only the name, but something of the character of our country.

Among the Turks who sought our acquaintance, was the *güm-rükjy*, or inspector of customs. Being accustomed to use some method of depletion in the spring, as many of his countrymen are, both for themselves and their horses, he informed us that he had heard of our success in the treatment of our tartar who had been sick, and wished that we would try our healing art upon himself. The presence of the Russians (who bear the blame of every thing that is wrong), had prevented him from taking his usual regimen the preceding spring, and he now felt the need of a good vomit and purge. His application was accompanied with an invitation to breakfast. Thinking, from his plethoric appearance, that only powerful medicines would affect him thoroughly, and give him a good opinion of our medical skill, as his countrymen are apt to esteem medicines only in proportion to their strength, we put a good dose of tartar-emetic, and another of calomel and jalap in our pockets, and went to his house. It was a fair specimen of the better sort of Turkish dwellings. The room in which we were received, had no means of excluding the cold of this wintry climate, without excluding the light also; for it was furnished with only shutters instead of glazed windows. Three or four feet of the side of the floor next the entrance, was depressed a step below the rest, for visitors to deposit their shoes, and servants to stand and await the commands of their master. The remainder was carpeted, and a sofa or couch, the only furniture, extended around the other three sides. Its elevation from the floor was perhaps a foot; its width was convenient for sitting or sleeping; it was spread with a continued mattress, covered with figured velvet; and a series of cushions, faced with the same material, lay upon it around against the wall. In the two corners were placed square cushions, making two seats more elevated and honourable than the rest; upon one of which our host seated himself, and requested one of us to occupy the other.

After the usual preliminary of pipes and coffee, a ewer of water and basin were brought for washing our hands, as a preparation for breakfast. The table was a copper tray, three or four feet in









known, and no wood is used except pine, and that brought from a distance of three days' journey, and you will allow me to call the climate and the country inhospitable.

The only protestant missionary effort, so far as our information extends, that has ever been attempted at Erzroom, or in any part of Turkish Armenia, was made just before we arrived. The missionaries at Shoosha, aware of the obstacles in the way of preaching the gospel to moslems under the Turkish government, determined to seize an opportunity of doing it, while the presence of a Russian army would afford them protection. Mr. Zaremba, therefore, taking a good quantity of the Scriptures in Turkish and Armenian, and a few for the Russians themselves, proceeded first to Tiflis, to make known his intentions to the governor. His excellency entered warmly into his project, and gave him letters to all the chief officers of the army, which secured him their favourable regards, and open and decided protection. His first visit was to Kars. There were no more than a hundred Turks in the city; but in the house of the ayán, where he carried his books for sale, he met a room full of effendies and others. They examined the Bible, and disputed, in a supercilious manner, proving themselves to be bigoted, and easily offended at having their faith questioned. He sold but one Turkish Bible, and that was on his return from Erzroom. At Bayezeed, also, he found but few moslems; and they were bigoted and inimical, and disposed to have but little to say to him. One Turk manifested some candour; but he sold no Turkish Scriptures. At Erzroom, where there was a great number of Turks, he determined at first to say nothing, and only send his books for sale through the bazárs and streets. Prices were offered much below that which he had fixed, and were at first refused; but he afterwards sold at any price, and even gave gratis. After seven or eight days, no more offers were made, and the sale ceased. He then began to talk with the people wherever he had opportunity. With a few encouraging exceptions, they were easily incensed at any thing said against their religion, and not disposed to inquire. He heard of eight of his books being torn in pieces. At last, after he had spoken for his passports to depart, the kády and müfty declared to the general, that so strong was the popular feeling against him, if he should be killed they could not be responsible. He still made a parting call upon one of them, and in a religious argument before a room full of moslems, boldly convicted him and

them of ignorance of their own Korán, in affirming that it contained a doctrine, which, in fact, it does not.

During the whole journey, though he had the Scriptures in every language he was likely to meet, he sold only to the amount of 17 ducats, or about 40 dollars. In Turkish, one Bible and 14 Testaments were sold, and 3 Bibles and 22 Testaments were given away. This seems but a discouraging report; and yet so strong is my impression of the fanatical and supercilious bigotry of the moslems of Turkey, that I am decidedly interested and encouraged by it. The intolerant spirit of their religion, and a thorough contempt for Christians, make them so indignant at an opposing word, and deprive them so completely of the least curiosity to read our Sacred Scriptures, that I am gratified whenever they are made to hear the truth at all, though it be but to gainsay and resist; and if but one copy of the Word of God is bought with the intention of reading it, I am encouraged. The bread has been cast upon the waters, and after many days it shall be found. How delightful, too, to see messengers of peace at hand, to avail themselves of even the openings made by war, to proclaim their glad tidings! Then is the wrath of man made to praise the Lord.

After a delay of several days for want of horses, in consequence of the emigrating Armenians having taken almost every animal that could draw or carry a burden, we made up by taking a mule, our number of five, and left Erzroom for Kars on the 22nd of June. Our direction was eastward along the foot of the mountain that rises behind the city, and led us over naked and uncultivated hills, which connect it with another nearly parallel range on the north, and separate the sources of the Euphrates from the tributaries of the Araxes. From the highest point we had a view of the whole plain of Hassan-kúlaah, which, at the end of three hours, we entered. It is somewhat lower, more level and fertile, than the plain of Erzroom, but like it, is without trees, and surrounded by woodless mountains striped with snow. Grain is sowed upon it in October, and reaped early in the succeeding August; and it is covered with snow from the last of November to the last of March. A number of villages appear upon different parts of it. We were overtaken by a party of five horsemen, who, armed with guns, pistols, swords, and long spears, and clothed with a mixture of nearly all the costumes found among the retainers of a Russian army, might have been taken for robbers. They proved to be





Armenians, commissioned by the Russian general to bring up safely the rear of the emigrants that still lingered behind. They were in excellent spirits, and boasted of their feats in intimidating the Turks who would retain the rayáhs; but we could not avoid the impression, from their manner, that they were quite as likely to intimidate the Armenians who would of their own accord remain. Keeping along the south side of the plain, we stopped for the night at Alavár, a little village containing 6 Turkish and 16 Armenian houses, the latter of whom commenced their departure just as we arrived.

*June 23.* Starting at 7 A.M. we passed over to Hassan-kúlaah, a distance of one hour. Just at its gate, we crossed, by an arched stone bridge, a small river running eastward toward the Aras. It is the Moorts of the Armenians.\* On its southern bank is a warm-bath, resembling that of Uluja, and of the temperature of 105°.

From the rock around, on both sides of the river, water and gas bubble up at almost every step. The town is situated at the foot of a rock, projecting from the mountain on the north side of the plain, and crowned with a fortress not yet entirely in ruins, and being itself surrounded by a wall, appears respectable at a distance. But we found many of its houses, nearly all of which were underground cabins, broken in and deserted; in the bazár we could procure literally nothing, not even a piece of tinder. The 100 Armenian families which it formerly contained, had gone, and the Turks had shut up their few shops, and were sitting as if to muse upon the desolation around them. It could hardly contain more than 400 or 500 houses. It is 6 hours distant from Erzroom.

Seven or eight miles beyond, the plain narrows to a valley that continues to follow the course of the river. Its whole length must be twenty miles, and its average breadth five or six. This morning it was crowded with Armenian emigrants. If, in some respects, their departure hindered us from obtaining the information we wished, in others it was favourable, for we passed such numbers between Erzroom and the Georgian boundary, that it was as if the whole Christian peasantry of the country were exhibited in review before us. These were from the villages on the plain of Erzroom. And deeply affecting it was to see the inhabitants of a whole province thus deserting the home of their fathers, and bearing in all their appearance such evident marks of the oppres-

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 39.



sion from which they were fleeing. In the United States we should have taken almost every individual for a beggar. They were clothed in rags. Their furniture consisted of a few dirty mattresses, cushions, coverlets and rugs, a cradle, a churn, a pail or wooden bottle, a few copper pans and kettles, and in some cases a small chest. A few cattle and sheep accompanied them. Mothers with infant children generally found a place in an empty cart. But in some cases they were mounted upon a horse, a mule, or an ass, with the heads of their little ones projecting from baskets or bags upon either side of the animal; in others, the tender charge was fastened alone upon the baggage in a cart, or upon the back of a beast; and not unfrequently the mother walked with it slung in a pouch upon her back. Most of the rest, men, women, and children, were on foot, though the mire in some parts of the plain was deep. All had the same hardy, sun-burnt, and coarse complexion. In none, not even in the females, all of whom, except the marriageable and newly married girls, were unveiled, did we discover that fair and interesting countenance which distinguishes their countrymen in Smyrna and Constantinople. They were equally inferior, too, in form, being lower in stature and of a broader and coarser frame. Nearly all bore marks of a desponding spirit. What had brought upon them this extreme of penury? Their country is hardly inferior to any in the world for the cultivation of grain, and the raising of herds and flocks; and their sobriety and orderly conduct is acknowledged by all. It can be nothing else than the blighting influence of Mohammedan oppression that has caused them thus to wither away.

Three hours from Hassan-kúlaah we passed the small village of *Köprü-köy* (Bridgeville), and reached the junction of the Moorts with the Aras, as the *Araxes* is now universally called. The principal stream is much longer and more rapid than its tributary, and comes down from the mountainous region to the south, where, we were told, it takes its rise at a place named *Bin-göl* (thousand lakes) in Khanoos, a sanják of Erzroom. A bridge is thrown over them at their junction, which is a well-built structure of hewed free-stone, resting upon seven unequal arches, and so little decayed that it might easily be put in complete repair. It is called *chobán-köprü* (shepherd bridge), from the fact, as tradition states, that it was built by a wealthy shepherd. After thus expending his property for the public good, he passed the remainder of his days



as a hermit upon the top of a precipice that here hangs over the left bank of the river. There, his tomb, in a spot marked by a few solitary pines, is even now such an object of veneration to the neighbouring peasants, that they often visit it to say their prayers.

The road to Tebriz, by Bayezed and Khoi, here separated from ours, and crossed the bridge to the right side of the river. We continued along its left bank, and at 3 P.M. reached the village at which we had intended to stop. Its inhabitants had their goods already packed in carts for their departure. The mud and dung were so deep that we could with difficulty walk from house to house. Most of the terraces were broken in, and would not defend us from the rain that was falling. The only spot upon which we could have possibly slept was the ground of a stable, and no food, not even a bit of bread could be obtained. We were glad to be relieved from the necessity of taking up with such accommodations, by learning of a place beyond, not far from the road, where some inhabitants were still remaining. How many villages around were left like this, so dilapidated that the storms of a few winters will wash them even with the ground, and leave not a trace of the people who once inhabited them! By a similar process have the regions of Western Asia been desolated, and the traces of thousands of its cities been erased, from the earliest wars and captivities of sacred history, to the present time. The river here flows through a broad tract of grazing land broken into swelling hills of a dry soil, and has upon its banks but a narrow margin of alluvial. Turning to the left among the hills, we saw no more of it, and thus escaped the Russian army, which was encamped at Khorasán, the next place on the direct road. Azáb was the village we were seeking, and we reached it at 5 P.M.

The whole number of carts that we passed to-day was 260. We conversed with many as we went along, and in the last company, a man more respectably dressed than the others, mounted on a horse, and armed with a brace of pistols in his girdle, rode up and entered into conversation. He showed himself at once to be a sensible man, and we at last discovered that he was the priest of a village near Erzroom. He assured us there were no schools in the villages around that city, any farther than that the parish priest generally taught a sufficient number to read to have the singers in the church, which the Armenian service requires. He once attempted to establish a more regular school in his own



village, but did not succeed. Those who wished their children to be educated sent them to Erzroom. In some villages of 15 or 20 houses not one could read, but in his, which contained 50, there were 15. His statements express the result of what we learned from other sources, and to avoid repetition, I gave them as such. In a word, the Armenian villagers of Erzroom were entirely without schools.

I have already given you the reasons assigned by the Turks for the departure of the Armenians. Curiosity would have prompted many inquiries of the emigrants themselves, but circumstances constrained us to the strictest caution. Though more than once solicited by the heads of villages for our advice, we uniformly refused it, assigning as a reason our ignorance of the government and laws of Russia. Very many, whom we encountered on the road, could give no other explanation of their emigration than that others were going, and they followed the multitude. Our friend the priest had more decided reasons. They were fleeing, he said, from oppression. Their taxes had been heavier than they could bear. The Turks individually had maltreated them. He had himself not unfrequently been obliged to entertain ten and fifteen horsemen, and endure their scoffs at himself and his religion. The last two had made him hold a candle for them all night, and otherwise treated him so shamefully, that he swore he would leave the country. He was now conducting his family and his flock to Georgia, where they would at least be on a level with Russian citizens, and no longer hear their religion cursed. Others, whose feelings resembled the priest's, told us that they had no charge to bring against their sovereign, but Erzroom being distant from his capital, and inhabited by the worst people in the world, his orders were little regarded. They loved their country, and were ignorant of that to which they were going; but their oppressions had been great, and they feared they would be greater if they remained, for the expenses of the war would probably be drawn from them. Turkish travellers often used them shamefully; instead of paying their host for their food, they would take from him some article of value, would curse his religion, and abuse his children.

Let me add a word of explanation to these complaints. All subjects of Turkey, not Mohammedan, pay an annual *kharáj*, or capitation tax, as the price of their head; it being the only condition upon which the Korán allows the toleration of their existence.





Other taxes, also, are often so unequally apportioned, that they bear the burden of them. And so universally venial and partial is justice, that they are not unfrequently, on the merest pretence, stripped of every cent. Their money, in fact, commonly flows, through one channel or another, into the treasury of the government or the pockets of its officers, about as fast as they can earn it. Their name, *rayáh*, literally means a flock; it is pastured for the sake of its fleece. A war generally increases their burdens, for they are made to pay for it. That any recent improvement in the Sultán's government would in this case benefit them, no security was given which they could trust. The Turks of Erzroom resisted all innovations before the war; and now not even a bishop was sent from the capital to give assurance of future good treatment, as ail seemed to expect. For they crowded around us at Erzroom to know if one was coming. The customary mode of entertaining travellers explains further their complaints of personal ill treatment. The villages of Turkish Armenia have no khans, or public houses of any kind, but the *kakhia*, as the assessor of the taxes and official and responsible head of a village is called, quarters travellers upon private families. When the entertainer, in these circumstances, is a despised Christian, and the guest a lordly Turk, abuse cannot but be frequent. The evidence of it has worked itself into the very dialect of the country. Almost the only terms we heard used by the Turks of Armenia for Christians, Christian gentlemen, and bishops, were *giaoor*, *chorbajy*\*, and *kara-bash*, meaning, infidel, soup-maker, and black-head; and they seemed to have become so common as no longer to be esteemed contemptuous by either party.

At Azáb some reluctance was manifested to entertaining us, but our muleteers soon procured us admission to a house. On entering, we asked the owner if he could lodge us, and were answered coolly that the *bin-bashy* (colonel) knew. Then, looking at us and listening to our conversation with each other a moment, he declared that we were not Russians; and it appeared that our men had endeavoured to obtain for us a forced hospitality by announcing us as officers of the army. We informed him that our language was English, and his countenance immediately brightened; the house was at our disposal, and whatever we wished was cheerfully

\* I am aware that this was applied as an honourable title to a certain officer of the janizaries, but I do not believe the use of it here mentioned has any connexion with that.

brought. No nation bears so good a character in Armenia as the English. A high idea is entertained of their neatness, rank, and liberality; and the stranger can receive no higher compliment, in the estimation of his host, than to be called a real Englishman. It ought, however, to be added, that hardly any other nation is personally known, except the Russians. The village contained 40 Armenian and two Turkish houses. The former were to leave the next day, and were then breaking in their terraces for the timber that supported them. The latter had already joined their brethren in some other place.

We passed the evening in conversation with the kakhia; and the following is the information we obtained from him, and others, respecting this section of country. The plain of Hassan-kúlaah, which we entered three hours from Erzroom on the 22nd, is the commencement of the district of Pásin. Of course, the hills we had previously passed separate the ancient provinces of High Armenia and Ararád: for Pasen was the most westerly canton of the latter. Pásin is now divided into two sanjáks dependant upon Erzroom, and called Upper Pásin and Lower Pásin. Hassan-kúlaah is the capital of the former, and Khorasán of the latter. Khorasán lies on the Aras, an hour from Azáb, and is a mere village, containing 50 Armenian and 40 Turkish houses. In both sanjáks there were about 1000 Armenian families, of which 300 or 400 were in Lower Pásin. The Turks were much less numerous. There were a few papal Armenians in Hassan-kúlaah, and four other villages. One village also in Lower Pásin contained a few Greeks, but they all emigrated. There were no schools in the villages, but a few children were taught by the priests to read. In some, there were no persons that could read; but in Azáb, perhaps one reader might be found in half the houses. No women could read nearer than Erzroom. The only crops cultivated here are barley and wheat, and the kakhia assured us that they yield from six to ten fold.

*June 24.* Our accommodations were not the best last night. The corner of the stable we occupied was but imperfectly defined, and we found a horse among us before morning. In similar circumstances, we have at other times been awakened by a calf gnawing at our saddles, or, more to our discomfort, by a cow despatching the last morsel of bread we had laid in store for our breakfast. Our visitor, on this occasion, was fortunately expelled before he





had trodden upon us, or done any mischief; but a stable, filled as was ours with horses and cows at this season of the year, could not be very fit, either in the temperature or purity of its air, for a sleeping room, and we arose unrefreshed and feverish. The pure morning air was doubly exhilarating, and soon completely revived us. On the farther side of a hill just beyond Azáb, were 300 carts of emigrants just breaking up their night's encampment. They had no shelter but the sky, except that here and there a few had joined, and tipping up four or five of their triangular carts around a semicircle, formed a shed resembling the vertical half of a cone. They must have lodged uncomfortably the last night, for so raw and showery had been the weather, as to make us prefer a stable to the open air. We soon turned over the hills to the right toward Mejenjérd, while they followed a more level but longer road to Kars farther to the left, where an additional number of at least 300 carts were in sight. The Russians were in motion upon the road from Khorasán to Mejenjérd, and as the whole Erzroom division of the army was on the march, we hardly parted company with them again till we reached Kars. No cultivation appeared to-day, nor indeed but very little yesterday, after we left the plain of Hassan-kúlaah.

We stopped at Mejenjérd. Two deep ravines, forming an acute angle, and both shut in by precipitous ledges of rocks, unite a little below the town. On the summit of the lofty tongue between them is a long and narrow rock, upon which stand the ruined walls of a fortress built of hewed stone. On the declivity just below are three or four isolated rocks, perhaps 20 feet square by 25 in height, and apparently resting on the surface of the ground; each of which has been excavated, by the people of a former age, for an oratory or chapel with its altar and baptismal font. The town is at the bottom of the western ravine, and is a mere village of 35 houses, 12 of which were Turks. A few of the Armenians were papists, but all of both sects had already left; and as the Russians were just arriving and encamping in the valley, the Turks had carefully shut themselves in their houses. We found at last an empty room, in a deserted Cossack post-house, furnished with a chair and table, articles of furniture which we had not seen this side of Constantinople, except among the Russians at Erzroom. A Turkish neighbour, on learning that we were not Russians, readily supplied us with a bowl of milk and a loaf of bread. Such



accommodations we were disposed to pronounce comfortable; and so long had we been obliged to write, seated upon the floor with our knee for a desk, that an opportunity to sit up to a table seemed a great luxury, and tempted us to spend the evening in writing.

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## LETTER V.

### PASHALIK AND CITY OF KARS.

Soghánly-dagh—Battles in the late war—Sleep on a mountain—The plain of Kars—Benkly Ahmed—Türkman's—Greek and Armenian worship—Armenian fasts—Superstition respecting the cross—Tenure by which land is held—Singular quarantine—Description of Kars—A venial Turk—Further facts respecting the emigration of the Armenians—The Armenians of Kars—Doctrine and practice of the Armenian church respecting departed spirits—Akhalsikhe—Leave Kars—Jamishly—Reach the Arpa-chai.

DEAR SIR,

MEJENGERD is the last town in the pashalik of Erzroom. Between it and the pashalik of Kars, there is an uninhabited mountainous tract of 12 hours. We made half of it on the 25th of June, the day after my last date. The ascent was difficult, but once upon the top we were conducted through a succession of valleys, beautiful for the meadow-like luxuriance of the grass that clothed, and the variety of flowers that ornamented them. The declivities of many of the hills and mountain summits too were covered with woodlands and forests, some of which, at no very distant period, had been completely prostrated by a tornado. It is from this mountain that wood is carried to Erzroom, a distance of more than 50 miles. We observed none but pine.

The highest ridge is two hours and a half from Mejengérd, and when we reached it at 9 A.M. the mud exhibited signs of having been slightly frozen in the night. It is called *Soghánly-dagh* (onion mountain), and is the spot where Marshal Paskevich encountered the Turkish army, which had fixed upon it as the only barrier to Erzroom. His victory was an easy one, for he only made a feigned attack, while the body of his army turned them, by pursuing the more level rout, which has been already mentioned as the one taken by the Armenians with their carts. The keys of



Erzroom were laid at his feet without further resistance, and the submission of the pashalik followed. The Russians allow that the Turks gave them but two fair trials of their bravery. One was at Akhaltsikhe, which resisted till its fortifications were ruined; and the other at Baiboort, where a smart rencounter took place at the very close of the war. Kars made a show of resistance, but the citadel capitulated as soon as the defenceless part of the town was occupied, and its walls hardly exhibit the mark of a single shot. On the whole, the Persians have acquired a much higher character for spirit and courage, with the Russian army of the Caucasus, than the Turks.

A small river runs to the left just beyond the summit referred to, and is probably the main branch of the river of Kars. The Russians had established two military posts upon the mountain, but the second, at which we would have stopped, was already crowded with the officers of the army, and we were obliged to push on a little further and spread our carpets under a pine tree. A neighbouring grove furnished us with fuel for as large a fire as we wished; and as the weather was calm, we should have had no cause of complaint, had our bill of fare been a little fuller. Fortunately we had roasted a good lamb two days before, a part of which still lingered in our süfreh, or we should have been absolutely compelled to fast; for Mejengérd was too poor to furnish us with even a stock of bread, and from this military post we could obtain but four little black loaves, too hard to yield to our organs of mastication.

*June 26.* Our lodgings in the open air proved colder than we had anticipated, and we had to call in the aid of our pelisses to obtain a comfortable degree of warmth. The thermometer stood, at day-break, at only  $36^{\circ} 30'$ ; and snow was lying on all the hills around. Immediately after starting, we left the pines behind; and you must not imagine that we saw any species of trees again, until they are mentioned; for I am such a friend of the woods, and they are in this region so rare, that you may be sure none will escape my notice.

After a gradual descent of no great distance, along a fertile tract of grazing land, the plain of Kars opened before us. It is an uneven tract of great width, bounded on either side by broken mountains, and extending eastward almost as far as the eye could reach. Indeed, after travelling through it, we knew not where to fix its limit in that direction, except at the mountains east of Gümry, a distance of 80 or 90 miles. We soon found ourselves



upon it, and rode for hours admiring the fertility of its soil, and the luxuriance of its vegetation. It was like a succession of meadows upon different levels. We were not surprised that Marshal Paskevich, as was reported in the army, envied the Turks the possession of such a tract, and strongly advised the emperor to retain it. Its fertility in ancient times was proverbial. The grandson of Haig, we were told, sent hither his son Shara, whose gluttony, and the number of whose children had become burdensome, because its productions are sufficiently abundant for his support. From him it derived its name Shirág, and from the tradition and its known fertility combined, originated the proverb, "If you have the throat of Shara, we have not the granary of Shirág."\* We crossed to the left of the river of Kars, and, an hour after, stopped at the village of Benkly Ahmed.

The plain here stretched off a great distance to the south, and several villages appeared upon it in that direction. Among them were seven or eight, formerly inhabited by Türkman's. It has been often said, that the Turks of that name are numerous in Armenia, and our instructions directed us to make inquiries respecting them. We did so, and heard of none in any part of Armenia which we visited except these. A tartar of Bayezeed did indeed affirm that there were some near Akhaltsikhe; but, as we heard of none in that region when we were here, and, as Kars is in the direction of Akhaltsikhe from Bayezeed, I suppose he had in mind the settlement of which I am now speaking, especially as his account corresponds with the character that was given of it here. The Türkman's are generally called *Türk*, by the body of Osmanlies; who repel that name from themselves, and appropriate the more honourable one of *müslmán*. They usually live a nomadic life, wandering from place to place with their herds and flocks. But these were cultivators of the soil, and, quite the opposite of their pastoral brethren, were known as a quiet and orderly people. They were Mohammedans, but had neither mollahs nor mosques, nor did they keep more than three days of the Ramadán; then, however, they ate nothing, night or day. Whether any of their brethren resemble them in these religious peculiarities, I am unable to say from personal inquiry, as we saw none. When the Russians came, all of them fled towards Sivás. It is to be hoped that geographers will no longer adhere to the old error of calling Arme-

\* Chamehéan, p. 1, c. 2.





nia, Turcomania. That name is never applied to it in Turkey itself, and there is not the shadow of a reason why foreigners should use it.

Benkly Ahmed is a common village of 50 or 60 Armenian, and 7 or 8 Greek houses. The former have four priests and one church. We attended evening prayers in the latter, and found it, like the houses, under ground, and bearing equal marks of poverty with them. I had new emotions in first attending divine service under ground. The simple fact turned my thoughts to the time when Christianity was driven, by persecution, into dens and caves of the earth, and both the miserable state of the building, and the aspect of the assembly clothed in rags, made me feel that I was among the subjects of a persecution similar in its ultimate effects, although milder and slower in its operation. The services were indeed lamentably far from primitive simplicity; but the persevering attachment to the Christian name, which has preserved them, however corrupt, could not but excite feelings of veneration. How many, I asked myself, in our native land, would stand the test that has tried this people, and remain as long as they have done uncontaminated by the imposture of the prophet of Mecca, could the hordes of Arabia and of Tartary ever spread desolation over the fair face of the New World? There is still, at the very least, the name of Christ left, and that is much; it is a charm which we all feel in common, a watchword to which we all answer.

The Greeks, or as they were called here, from their resemblance to that nation in faith, the Georgians, had neither priest nor church of their own, but worshipped at a separate alter by the side of the one at which the Armenians payed their devotions, and at the same time. This evening an old man stood there, making Greek bows and crosses before a picture of St. George, while the rest of the congregation were performing Armenian prostrations at another shrine. It was a fine exhibition of the only difference that is much thought of by the common people between the worship of the two sects. The language of the prayers is of minor importance; it may be Greek, or Armenian, or any other unknown tongue; only let each have his favourite shrine, and go through with his own distinctive evolutions of the body, and all is right. Not often, however, are they willing to worship in the same building; and we should have given the good people of Benkly Ahmed credit for unusual harmony, had we not known that they were forced to it by

poverty, and felt that the continuance of sectarian distinctions at all, under such circumstances, was a stronger evidence of mutual prejudices, than the juxtaposition of their altars was, of fraternal union.—These are the only Greeks that the pashalik contains.

At the close of the service, we entered into conversation with the priests who had officiated. They were ignorant in the extreme. From our European dress they could conceive us to be none other than Russians, for they knew not that any other people wear it. They were indeed informed of the existence of several European nations, but of America they had never heard under any name. Their first question, on learning that we were from an unknown world, was to ascertain whether we were Christians, moslems, or heathen; or in their form of asking it, whether we were *khachabashd*, adorers of the cross, a term synonymous, in an Armenian's vocabulary, with Christian. Our answer led to other questions, designed to ascertain to what Christian sect we belonged. The first respected our times and mode of fasting, a test to their minds most decisive, for it would in fact distinguish between any sects they knew. We replied, that we believed it to be the duty of Christians to fast, but as the Bible had fixed no definite time, we left it with particular churches, or individuals, to fast whenever they might deem it for their edification; but that we knew nothing of a distinction of meats, and our fasting was a total abstinence from food. This was so strange a kind of Christianity to them, that they pronounced us at once to be like the Turks. We informed them that we acknowledged only the Bible as our guide, and that said nothing of a distinction of days or meats; while they had learned these distinctions from subsequent canons and councils of men, which we did not receive. They were not disposed for controversy, and slurred over the difference between us, by the charitable proposition, that if we believed in the same God it was enough. To which we assented, after amending it by adding the necessity of believing in the same Saviour. Having succeeded so badly in this test, they resorted to another, to ascertain where to class us. It was respecting our mode of making the cross; for while non-protestant Christians make the cross as a sign of Christianity, they do it in different ways, as a sign of their sect. This was less successful than the other, for we plainly told them that we did not make it at all. At such a heresy they were amazed, our claim to the name of Christian was of course immediately





doubted, and they asked if we did not believe in Christ. We explained how essential a part of our religion such a belief is, and closed the conversation by remarking upon the fraternal affection which ought to exist between all Christians, to whatever sect they may belong.

This is but a specimen of frequent conversations that took place in our journey. For fasting and the cross are among the most prominent of the superstitions of the Armenians; and neither we, nor any protestant missionaries, could fail to be brought often to a declaration of our practice in these respects, and to be set down immediately, if not for the wildest of heretics, at least for very strange Christians. I cannot do better, therefore, than to state briefly the Armenian rules and doctrines on both these points. In distinction from the papists, who keep Friday and Saturday, the Armenians, like the Greeks, and, in fact, all the oriental churches, fast on Wednesday and Friday; which days, some say, were appointed by the apostles in reference to the fact, that on the first Christ foretold that one of them would betray him to be crucified, and on the other the deed was actually done. They have other fasts of a week and still longer, preceding most of their great festivals, so that out of 365 days in a year, 156 are days of fasting. I ought to remark, however, that I apply this term by way of accommodation, for not one of them is properly a fast, nor do the Armenians call them so. Instead of *dzom*, which means a fast, they name them only *bahk*, or vigils. They confess that the prophets, Jesus Christ and the apostles, speak only of proper fasting; that that is most acceptable to God; and that vigils have been instituted on account of our inability, through spiritual coldness, to fast. Still we have not been able to learn that they have any law that appoints any day, or a part of any day, to strict fasting, nor any practice to that effect, except in individual cases and in particular convents.\*

\* The following statement of the fasts of the Armenian church was drawn up by bishop Dionysius, with the help of the Armenian Almanac.

For 40 days, from the Resurrection to the Ascension of Christ, there is no fast at all; any common food may be eaten. So likewise for 8 days from Christmas common food may be eaten. Except that, in certain years, the festival of St. Basil being (according to their reckoning) near, there is a fast of a week, which, since they deem it impossible to break it, they have to keep it in the eight days of Christmas.

The fasts are, 1st. *Arachavór*, the one just mentioned, in January or February; 5 days.—2nd. *Aghovats*, salt and bread; the quadragesimal lent till holy week; 40 days.—3rd. *Avák-shapát*, great week; holy week from Saturday to Saturday, though on the evening of the last Saturday, or Easter eve, after mass, every thing is eaten excepting meat, and it is



In their fasts, the Armenians, unlike the papists, forbid fish and white meats; they are even stricter than the Greeks in their strictest days, for they make no exception of snails, shell-fish, or the spawn of fish. In a word, no animal food of any kind is allowed. Even farther than this, olive oil, oil of sesame, wine, and distilled spirits are forbidden. Every fast-day is equally subject to these rigid rules. Does any one ask why so heavy a burden is imposed upon him? he is warned that even the question is sinful. For the Fathers ordered all by the command of God, and his duty is to obey, or if he be unable, he must still think the laws to be good and blameless, and the fault to be all his own.\* The more intelligent and thoughtful of the people are aware, that sinful conduct, as well as particular kinds of food, must be avoided, and that the soul must be humble and devout, in order that the fasts may be acceptable; still labour is no where forbidden nor discouraged, nor are any more religious services appointed on these days than on any other. I am sorry to add, that while, with the exception of oil, the prohibited articles of food are still abstained from with much strictness, intoxicating liquors have now overflowed all the barriers that distinguish different days. But I will leave the present mode of observing the fasts, and their effects upon the character, to be developed in the course of our journey.

The Armenians have an extreme veneration for the original cross, on which our Saviour was crucified; attributing to it powers of intercession with God, and of defending from evil, and believing it to be the sign of the Son of Man that, at the judgment, will appear in the heavens coming out of the east, and shining even unto the west.† In imitation of it many crosses are made of metal, and called *navagadik*, or rejoicing; 8 days.—4th. Vigil of the festival of *Eghia*, Elijah, which is always whitsun-week; 5 days.—5th. Vigil of *Loosavorich*, the Enlightener; 5 days.—6th. Vigil of *Vartavár*, the Transfiguration, with the sixth day *navagadik*, as above explained; 5 days.—7th. Vigil of *Astvadzadzin*, the Parent of God, with the sixth day *navagadik* (some, like the Greeks, keep 15 days); 5 days.—8th. Vigil of *Khacheeráts*, the Elevation of the cross, with the sixth day *navagadik*; 5 days.—9th. Vigil of *Varakakhach*, the cross of Varák, or, according to some, the Vigil of the festival of *Soorp Keórk*, St. George; 5 days.—10th. *Hisnág*, the little fifty, when some keep fifty days till Christmas; 5 days.—11th. Vigil of *Soorp Hagóp*, St. James, which some keep with great strictness for fear of the plague, as he is the defender from that disease; 5 days.—12th. Vigil of *Dznoont*, Christmas, the evening of the last day of which, or Christmas eve, is *navagadik*, as on Easter eve; 6 days.—13th. Wednesdays in the year, not included in the above fasts; 28 days.—14th. Fridays likewise not included; 29 days. Making in all 156 fasting days.

\* See Armeno-Turkish Catechism, printed at Constantinople with the sanction of the patriarch Boghos in 1820, p. 92—100.

† The following are quotations from the *Jamakírk* (church book), which contains the daily prayers of the church. "Through the supplications of the holy cross, the silent intercessor \*\*\*\*\* O merciful Lord, have compassion upon the spirits of our dead." "Let us supplicate



other materials to be used in churches and elsewhere. To consecrate them, they are washed in water and wine, in imitation of the water and the blood that flowed from our Saviour's side, and anointed with meirón in token of the Spirit that descended and rested upon him; suitable passages are read from the Psalms, the Prophets, the Epistles, and the Gospels; and then the priest prays, "That God may give to this cross the power of that to which he was himself nailed, so that it may cast out devils, may heal the diseases of men, and appease the wrath that descends from heaven on account of our sins, to remain upon it himself always as upon his original cross, and make it his temple and throne, and the weapon of his power, so that our worship before it may be offered not to created matter, but to Him, the only invisible God." After a cross has undergone this ceremony, it may be set up toward the east, as an object of worship and prayer, while to treat an unconsecrated one thus, would be idolatry, and a downright breach of the second commandment. For, by the act of consecration, Christ is inseparably united to it, and it becomes his "throne," his "chariot," and his "weapon," for the conquest of Satan, so that, though it is honoured on these accounts, the worship is not given to it, but to Him who is on it. The bodily eye sees the material cross, but the spiritual eye sees the divine power that is united with it. "Therefore," says a distinguished Armenian writer, "thou believer in God, when thou seest the cross, know and believe that thou seest Christ reclining upon it; and when thou prayest before the cross, believe that thou art talking with Christ, and not with dumb matter. For it is Christ that accepts the worship which thou offerest to the cross, and it is he that hears the prayer of thy mouth, and fulfils the petitions of thy heart, which thou askest in faith."\*

Besides these images of the cross, they also, like all non-pro-

from the Lord the great and mighty power of the holy cross for the benefit of our souls." "When the trumpet shall sound, the Levitical letter shall appear, the rays of the holy cross from the east shall radiate and shine."

\* See *Kirk Unthanragán*, or the Catholic Book, of Nerses Shnorháli, p. 95, 259—262. Nerses Shnorháli, or the Graceful, was great grandson of Gregory Makisdros, whose name often occurs in the history of the last of the Pakradians, and brother of the Gregory whose election to the office of Catholicos when he was but twenty years of age, caused the bishop of Aghtamár to secede, and who made the castle of Dzovk, his paternal inheritance, the seat of his see. Nerses was himself elected Catholicos in A.D. 1166, and exercised his office in Hromcla, whence he is also called Clajeusis. High birth, office, and talents gave him great influence in his day; many parts of the book of common prayer (*Jamakirk*) were composed by him, and his works are now regarded universally as among the highest authorities of the Armenian church. He holds the rank of a saint in its calendar. Chamcheán, p. 6, c. 4, 7.



testant Christians, frequently make the sign of the cross, and to this the priest referred in the conversation I have reported. Crossing one's self, they are taught to believe, is the mark of a Christian, in such a sense, that, as a shepherd knows his sheep by their mark, so Christ knows the sheep of his flock by their crossing themselves. The apostles first introduced this ceremony, they say, and parents are urged to teach it to their children the first thing, lest the greater part of the sin of their making it incorrectly through life fall upon them.\* By it they profess to signify, first, a belief in the Trinity, as the three persons of it are named; and, second, the mediatorial work of Christ, as bringing the hand from the forehead to the stomach, represents his descent from heaven to earth, and bringing it from the left to the right breast, that he delivered the souls that were in hades, and made them worthy of heaven. They make it at every falling and rising in time of prayer, and on many other occasions; such as beginning an important business, going to bed at night, rising in the morning, dressing, washing, eating, drinking, going out at night, or entering any dangerous place. The benefits they expect from it, are, that it will make their prayers acceptable, and their work easy; that it will defend them from the wiles of evil spirits, and give them strength to war against sin.†

In regard to education, the priests assured us that there was no school in Benkly Ahmed, nor in any of the villages nearer than Kars. Each of them was accustomed to teach two or three children, and there might be eight or ten people in the village who could read. They thought the same proportion might answer for other places. Among the rest some females could read; in fact, if a father himself knew how, he taught both sons and daughters without distinction.

We made occasional inquiries respecting the tenure by which the Christian peasants in this part of Turkey hold the lands which they

\* Still, a little instruction on this head even at your age, will, I suspect, be new. "The rule for making the cross is this;—to carry the hand but to four places; the first of which is the forehead, the second the bottom of the breast, the third above the left breast, and the fourth above the right breast. As the arms of the cross are four, so the words to be said in making it are four, one for each arm, viz. In nomine Patris | et Filii | et Spiritus | Sancti." Life of Loosavorich, p. 88, 89.

The Armenians and papists perform this ceremony alike; but the Greeks, though guilty of the absurdity of putting the hand upon the right before the left, show a superior trinitarian orthodoxy by making it with three fingers; while the Jacobites, Copts, and the Abyssinians give an offensive prominence to their monophysitism by making it with one.

† Catechism, p. 40—45.





occupy, but learned little that was satisfactory. Near Erzurum, we were assured, some of them were freeholders; and those who were not, if they stocked their farms themselves, paid their landlord one-half of the produce, otherwise they paid him two-thirds. But here the poor people seemed not to know what freehold estate was. Each one sowed, they said, where he pleased, without considering any particular spot as his by right of possession or tenancy, and paid only the regular tenth of what he reaped to government. Still they spoke of the lord of their village, and said, what was afterwards confirmed, that many of the Turks in town, when they fled at the time of its capture, sold their villages to Armenians, under the expectation that the Russians would retain possession of the country. In fact, we were told at Kars that none of the Armenians in this pashalik were freeholders before the war.

*June 27.* Between Benkly Ahmed and Kars, a distance estimated at 3 hours, but which we were five in travelling, the plain is more level and fertile than what we passed yesterday, but not a single cultivated spot, nor an inhabited village, did we see. On coming again in sight of the road from Azáb, which we had left three days before, we found it crowded for a long distance with carts; and that on which we were travelling, also, was after a while filled with the Armenians of Khanoos. We had elsewhere been informed, that the Armenians in that sanják were more numerous than the moslems, and amounted to 700 houses, and we were now told that all had left. They seemed more uncivilized than any company we had passed, as might be expected from their vicinity to the Kürds. Among them we first observed the custom, that afterwards became so familiar to us, of using oxen and buffaloes as beasts of burden. Most of them were on foot, and it was disgusting, and at the same time pitiful, to see the females, many of them with children slung in bags upon their backs, wading through mud and brooks up to their knees, and deeper. An hour from the city, we crossed again to the right bank of the river by a stone bridge.

At the gate of Kars a Russian sentry stopped us, and demanded our passports. After an hour's delay, they were returned, with an order for us to be admitted, and a hint that we must report that we had been made to perform quarantine. So we were carefully conducted to a dark smoke-house, and locked up with a pot of fuming matter. But, after a minute, and before the smell of brim-

stone had reached our clothes, or even our nostrils, the door was opened, and our quarantine was ended. Our baggage, in the mean time, had remained without, and one muleteer to guard it. At this ridiculous farce even the health officers themselves laughed, but the reason of it was obvious. The Armenian emigrants were arriving in too great numbers to be freely admitted to the town without embarrassment, and quarantine offered a good pretence for excluding them, especially as it had existed with some strictness in the former part of the campaign. In fact, the ground before the city was covered with them, while we were not only admitted thus easily, but afterwards went out to them and returned without hindrance.

Kars is situated on the north side of the plain, at a point where the river, flowing into the mountain through a deep and narrow ravine, cuts off a piece of it convenient for a citadel. On the back side towards the river, this hill is perpendicular, but is commanded by still higher parts of the mountain across the stream. A fort crowns its summit; and its southern side, which is covered with the principal buildings of the city, is enclosed by a wall that sweeps down each end and runs along its base. The largest portion of the town lies in front of the citadel, and is itself partly surrounded by a wall now in ruins. A large suburb, however, occupies the face of the mountain itself across the river to the west, and is connected by two substantial stone bridges with the town and the citadel. From the river the inhabitants supply themselves with water. The houses of the citadel are tolerably large and well built for Turkey, but those of the town are of the under-ground architecture of the villages. The terraces of many had been broken in for the wood which supports them, and the work of destruction was going on while we were there. For Kars is as destitute of wood as Erzroom, and obtains it from the same mountain; and its climate too seemed to be no milder, for from the 27th of June to the 2nd of July, the thermometer, in our room at mid-day, ranged only from 55° to 65°. It is 36 hours from Erzroom, and 44 from Tiflis. The snowy summit of mount Ararat can just be seen from it, bearing S. 65° E.

The most interesting facts in the ancient history of Kars have been alluded to in the Introduction. Under the Turks, it was, until taken by the Russians in July of 1828, the capital of a small pashalik, and the residence of a pashá. It is now governed by





only a mütsellim subject to the pashá of Erzroom. Among the sanjaks into which the pashalik is divided, we heard mentioned, Zarishád in the direction of Akhaltsikhe, Kaghezmán in the direction of Eriván, and Kars, or, as it is also called, Takht in the direction of Erzroom; which probably correspond nearly with Vanánt, Apegheánk, and Shirág, cantons of the ancient province of Arrarád, for the whole pashalik was embraced in that province.

The Turkish population of the city, and I believe also of the pashalik, was formerly more numerous than that of the Armenians; but nearly all fled before the Russians, and we saw very few of them. The ayán, Aboo Aga, received us with civility, and furnished us with lodgings. But a more mercenary man I have rarely met. He held his office as head of the Turks, and had regular pay from the *Russians*, and was of course a great admirer of them to their face. Indeed, he liked them so much that he promised never to separate from them, but to accompany them when they should leave. *Us*, as we were of the English race, he warned on our arrival that they were all thieves; that we must never step from our door without locking it lest we should be robbed, as such accidents were occurring every day; and that they had ruined the city. But neither his opinions nor his attentions did he intend to give us gratis, for hardly an article that a traveller ever puts in his trunk failed of being mentioned, with a declaration that it would be a most gratifying memento of the pleasure he had derived from our acquaintance. To his *countrymen* he declared that only the presence of the Russians prevented him from making the holy pilgrimage to Mecca, and that he had every thing in readiness to start the moment they were gone. The fact was, that being yet fearful that he should be obliged to flee into Russia for his life, he had packed his goods to be in readiness, and hoping still to compromise with his country for his treason, he took every measure to make his countrymen view his conduct favourably. He even imagined that we might exert an influence to get him appointed pashá of Kars, declaring that the Turks of the place all desired that he might fill that office. The scale ultimately turned in favour of remaining, and on our second visit to Erzroom we were amused to learn that he was actually at the head of the pashalik, with the title of mütsellim.

We were prevented from seeing much of the Armenians, not, as at Erzroom, because they had gone, but because they were going,



and had their thoughts too much engrossed in that way to allow of their being profitably directed to other subjects. Besides, they were always ready to ask our advice, and we were not yet sufficiently acquainted with our situation to feel free from embarrassment in either giving or withholding it. For, that the Russians, the rear of whose army was now concentrated here, were deeply interested in the matter, was evident. The fact that, in retiring from Persia at the close of a former war, they had taken with them nearly all the Christian population of Aderbaján, was well known. In the treaty of Adrianople with Turkey, they had caused an article to be inserted, that "there should be granted to the respective subjects of the two powers, established in the territories restored to the sublime Porte, or ceded to the imperial court of Russia, the term of eighteen months from the ratification of the treaty, to dispose, if they should think proper, of their property, acquired either before or since the war, and to retire with their capital, their goods, furniture, &c. from the states of one of the contracting powers into those of the other and reciprocally."\* And wherever their army marched, a census of the Christians had been taken, whether they expressed a wish to leave or not.

None of the Armenians would allow that flattering promises had been held out to induce them to emigrate, and many declared the contrary. The offers really made them were, to the inhabitants of cities, lots for their houses and shops; to the peasants, as much land as they could cultivate; an exemption of all from taxes for six years; and an appropriation of 1,000,000 of roubles (250,000 silver roubles), and of a large quantity of grain for the poor. But, though none allowed that they were allured away, many said they were frightened, and they were about as likely to assign fear of the Russians as fear of the Turks, as a reason for going. The morning we entered Erzroom, a well-dressed Armenian gentleman, mounted and armed, came out to meet our company, and declared that for refusing to go, he had been confined two or three days in prison, from which he had obtained his release only by changing his mind. His high spirits, however, exhibited in curvetting his charger and firing his pistols, convinced us that he was quite as glad to get rid of Turkish vassalage as of a Russian prison. At Kars we had a singular visit from another Armenian of Erzroom, who was a gentleman both in his dress and his manners. Having heard, he said,

\* Treaty of Adrianople, 13th Art.



that we were not Russians, he had come to ask our candid opinion whether they would injure him if he should return to his city. We were awake to the suspicion that he might be a spy, but did not hesitate to declare our conviction that he had no reason for the least apprehension. He left us affirming that he should certainly go back, and that were the rest of his countrymen persuaded of the truth of what we had said, half of them would follow his example.

The extent of the country whose inhabitants emigrated is the same with that of the Russian conquests mentioned in the beginning of the preceding letter; except that the troops remained so short a time in Gümish-knáneh and Baiboort, that few had time to leave those places; and from Terján, we were told, only forty or fifty families left, although all had the offer. The real number of emigrants was stated to us by an intelligent bishop, who was with the army, and said he had his information directly from General Pankratieff, at 7000 families from the pashalik of Erzroom, 4000 from that of Kars, and 4000 from that of Bayezeed, making in all 15,000 families, or about 75,000 souls. When we were at Erzroom the second time, however, a young man in the service of the collector of taxes assured us, on the authority of his master, that 97,000 souls left that pashalik alone. They are all located in the part of the pashalik of Akhaltsikhe which was retained by the Russians, and in the adjacent parts of Georgia, except those from Bayezeed, who settled not far from the lake of Seván.

The Armenians of Kars had one church, which was on the same hill as the citadel, but outside of its walls. Our first visit to it was at evening prayers. Its interior resembled that of the church of Erzroom in dirt and darkness, except that a profusion of old silver lamps were suspended from the roof, and a silver cross thickly set with jewels adorned an altar covered with a cloth glittering with spangles. Three priests, who were present, estimated the Armenian population of the city at 600 houses; said they had seventeen priests and two vartabéds, with a bishop at their head, whose jurisdiction extended over the whole pashalik; and that there were three vartabéds more in the convent of St. John, nine hours distant towards Eriván. There was formerly another large convent only an hour from the city, but it is now in ruins, and no longer inhabited.

One of our informants was teacher of the only Armenian school in town. It contained, he said, about fifty lads, who learned to



read and write, but were not advanced so far as grammar. The Psalms, the Gospels, the Acts, and a work called Narek were the principal books used. It was the first and only school we found in Turkish Armenia; and Mr. Zarembo, in his journey, heard of none except in Erzroom, Bayezed, and Kars. The two former were broken up before we reached those places; and as the Armenians left Kars soon after we were there, we may conclude, that when we returned there was not one school in all this region.

Our next visit to the church was in the morning, and for the purpose of attending mass. At the close we had an opportunity of hearing prayers for the dead; for a vartabéd had died two or three days before, and prayers were now read over his grave at the door of the church. A minute description of the ceremony would be useless. Suffice it to say, that the bishop, one or two vartabéds, and a number of priests assisted, and the service was very long. In fact, the Armenians have a distinct set of prayers for dead clergymen of all orders, which make quite a book, and require an hour or two to be repeated. They are said on each of the first seven days after death, earth being at every time thrown upon the grave as if the burial was still going on; and also on the fifteenth, and the fortieth days, and at the end of a year.

It has been repeatedly asserted that the Armenians believe departed spirits to be in a state of insensibility from death till the judgment. But the assertion is untrue. Some, and probably most, may say that neither the reward of the righteous, nor the punishment of the wicked, is complete till the soul is reunited to the body, yet the general belief certainly is that the former are in a state of enjoyment, and the latter of misery, and that they are separated from each other. An Armenian bishop declared to us, that those who die guilty of mortal sins unconfessed go directly to hell; that those who are guilty of only venial sins and have confessed, communed, and done penance, go directly to heaven; and that those who have confessed and communed, but not done sufficient penance, will go to heaven if the church prays for them. When asked what would become of them if the church did not pray, he said, with some embarrassment, "Why, if they have no mortal sins, they must go to heaven of course, but so the church explains it." A statement of a council of high clergy (of whom the Catholicos of Sis was one), held at Constantinople not many



years ago, is still more explicit; and the state of departed spirits is so important an article of faith that I cannot refrain from making a full extract.

“The retribution,” it says, “of separate spirits, when they bid adieu to the world, is, according to the doctrine of St. Gregory Loosavorich, as follows. ‘Saints shall be near to Christ, for where I am, says he, there shall also my servant be. John xii. 26.’ Again, ‘when earthly life is completed by the command of death, the spirit is sent to God who gave it, and the body returns to the dust from which it was made by the Creator. Angels and the spirits of saints come forth to meet the spirits of the holy and just, and with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, conduct them before God, praising the mighty glory and majesty of the holy Trinity, and thanking his beneficent goodness for transferring those who are called, into his own kingdom and glory, from earthly things to heavenly, from dishonour to honour’ (Hajakhabadoom, p. 152, 153). And again in the same book, p. 171, he says, ‘They who, being firm in the holy love of Christ, gave their own souls to death, \*\*\*\* are saved. And by the mercy of the Holy Ghost, the gates of the life of favour, the mansions above, where the assembly of the saints are at rest, shall be opened.’ But for those who die in venial sin, and for those who have not completed here the penance of mortal sins that have been pardoned [absolved by the priest], we pray, saying, ‘Grant them mercy, pardon, and remission of sins.’ (Vid. Jamakirk.) And in the churches we cry, ‘God, giver of pardons, forgive ours that sleep’ [our dead friends], (Sharagan, p. 117,) ‘and comfort them in thy royal pavilion of rest.’ (Id. p. 121.)” “Wherefore the priest in the holy mass prays, saying, ‘O Lord, remember the spirits of them that rest, and enlighten and rank them with thy saints in thy heavenly kingdom.’ For thus St. Loosavorich taught, saying; ‘but as to believers who have committed sin, and confessed, and done penance, and received the sacrament that procures salvation [communed], and bid farewell to the world, let them be remembered in the sacrifice of Christ [the mass], and in prayer, and in charity to the poor, and in other good works, that by the good deeds of those that survive, they that rest may gain the victory of eternal life.’ (Hajakh. p. 160.) Wherefore the place in which the departed spirits are, who need the prayers of the church, is called



by us *gayán* [mansion], but by others *kavarán* [place of penance], or *makrarán* [place of purification]. But we understand that impenitent, irreligious, and unbelieving sinners are, from this moment, abandoned and condemned in hell. In the words of St. Loosavorích, we say, ‘Different is the mansion of those who despised his law, and served grievous lusts and divers sins, for they shall inherit the outer darkness. Darkness here is outer evil, for them whose thoughts and senses are darkened, and who have wandered far from life \*\*\*. And there they are in the fire of hell, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ (Hajakh. p. 153).”\* Another authority adds, that “The wicked must be burned in unquenchable fire, for as there is no end to the glory of the righteous, so there is none to the torments of the wicked.”†—Wherein now does this doctrine differ from that of the papal church? The *name* of purgatory is wanting indeed, and the Armenians reject it as universally and as obstinately as the Greeks; but the *thing* is here.‡ I am well aware that the council whose language I have used was rejected by the popular voice for having been partial to papacy, but its quotations are from universally received authorities, and are certainly sufficiently explicit.

In the practice of the church, the same doctrine is most fully acted upon. *Prayers* and *masses* are said, and *charity* given continually for the benefit of the dead. The *prayers* are found in nearly all the offices of the church. The daily service is full of them. In addition to the specimens contained in the above extract, I cannot withhold the following. “Through the entreaties of the holy cross, the silent intercessor, and of the mother of God, and of John the forerunner, and of St. Stephen the proto-martyr, and of St. Loosavorích the patriarch of Armenia, and of the holy apostles, and of all the martyrs; O merciful Lord, have compassion upon

\* Hraver Siroy, p. 23—28.

† Catechism, p. 9.

‡ Compare the following, which is the third decree of the 16th general council of the papists, held at Florence, A.D. 1438, 1439. “If they decease truly penitent in the love of God, before they have satisfied for commissions and omissions by fruits meet for repentance, their souls shall be purified by the pains of purgatory. And to release them from such pains, the aids of believing survivors contribute, such as the sacrifices of mass, prayers, alms, and other acts of piety, which are customarily performed by believers for other believers, according to the rules of the church. But the souls of those who, after baptism, have incurred no stain of sin, and those also who, after having contracted the guilt of sin, have been, either in their own bodies, or when stripped of those bodies, purified, are received immediately to heaven, and clearly behold the triune God as he is; but one more perfectly than another, according to the diversity of merits. But the souls of those who decease in mortal actual or only in original sin, descend immediately to hell; but to be punished with different degrees of punishment.”



the spirits of our dead." Prayers are also frequently said, and incense burned over the graves of the deceased, particularly on Saturday evening, which is the special season for remembering the dead in the prayers and alms.

*Mass* is said for the souls of the departed on the day of the burial, on the seventh, the fifteenth, and the fortieth days, and at the end of the first year; and also at other times, as often as the survivors will pay the priests for mentioning their names. For you must understand that the whole ceremony of mass is not performed extra for the occasion; but the priest, when he comes to the proper place in the common morning mass, besides praying for all the dead in general, as above quoted, merely names, also, in particular the person or persons requested. Such are the private masses of the Armenians, whether for the dead or the living; for the latter obtain the benefit in the same way. What this benefit is, you will learn from the following words of an Armenian writer already quoted. "The sacrifice of Christ [the mass] which the holy priests perform with true faith in the name of the dead, is in greatness far above thought and language. For if Christ, by being once offered a sacrifice on the cross, put away the sin of men's nature derived from Adam, when he is offered many times in the name of a Christian that sleeps [is dead], what sin can it be that the heavenly Father will not pardon on account of the sacrifice of his only begotten Son? And to the believer, that which Christ offered, and that which the priests offer, is the same sacrifice. Only let him that sleeps have been, in his last hour, in the true faith, and penitent for sin."\*

*Charity* is given by surviving friends to the poor in the name of the dead, with the hope that its merits will be credited to them, as if they had done it in person. And the merit of charity is supposed to be great. It procures pardon both for the living and the dead; it gives a pleasing sensation to departed spirits before the judgment, and at that day will cause the righteous, whether performed by them in person, or in their name by surviving friends, to stand at the right hand, and hear the joyful sentence of approbation.† Besides gifts of money and other modes of charity common to papists, the Armenians have one that is peculiar. It is the sacrifice of an animal. The victim may be an ox, or a sheep, or any clean beast

\* Unthanragán of Nerses Shnorháli, p. 252.

† Unthanragán, p. 252.



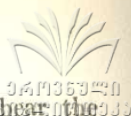
or fowl. The priests having brought it to the door of the church, and placed salt before the altar, read the Scripture lessons selected for such occasions, and pray, mentioning the name of the person deceased, and entreating the forgiveness of his sins. Then they give the salt to the animal, and slay it. A portion belongs to the priest, other portions are distributed to the poor, and of the remainder a feast is made for the friends. None may remain till the morrow. These sacrifices are not regarded as propitiatory, like those of the Jews, for the Armenians hold that they were abolished by the death of Christ; but as a meritorious charity to the needy. They have always, at least in modern times, a special reference to the dead, and are generally, though not necessarily, made on the day that a mass is said for the same object. The other most common occasions are the great festivals of the saints, and what are called the Lord's festivals. At Easter especially, one or more is always sacrificed, the whole congregation frequently contributing to the expense, and then dividing the victim or victims among them. But even this is in memory of the dead. Its origin, we are told by Nerses Shnorháli, on the authority of the Catholicos, Isaac the Great, was as follows. When the nation embraced Christianity, under the preaching of St. Gregory Loosavorích, the converted pagan priests came to him and begged that he would provide for them some means of support, as the sacrifices on which they formerly lived were now abolished. He accordingly ordered that a tenth of the produce of the fields should be theirs, and that the people, instead of their former offerings to idols, should now make sacrifices to God in the name of the dead, as a charity to the hungry.\*

Kars was one of the stations of the Jesuit missions in Armenia, at which they numbered many converts†; but now there is not a papist in the city, nor even in the pashalik.

We wished to take Akhaltsikhe in our way to Tiflis, especially as it was the rendezvous of the Armenian emigrants. But that route would have increased the distance, and interfered with the quarantine regulations, on entering Georgia, so much, that we soon saw its inexpediency. I will therefore say a word respecting that place, before leaving Kars. Akhaltsikhe (or Akhiskhab) is situated in the mountains which were called by the Greeks Moschici, and

\* Unthanragán, p. 242—252.

† Lett. Ed. et Cur. vol. 3, p. 463.



gave to the region the name of Meschia. They now bear the name of Childir-dagh; evidently related to the *Chaldæi*, who once occupied those parts. It is the only place of importance now existing in the ancient Armenian province of Daik, and was, before the war, the capital of a small pashalik. No other place that came within the range of our inquiry in Turkish Armenia, contains any Jews. Here they number about 60 families in the city, and as many in the surrounding villages. They have been in the country from time immemorial, and speak no language but Turkish and Georgian. There are also in the pashalik many people of the Georgian race. The Turks seem to have inherited much of the bravery of its ancient Armenian inhabitants, but they were a bad people. Besides giving an asylum to the discontented subjects of the Georgian provinces, they carried on, according to information given us by Turks themselves in Kars, a clandestine slave trade with their neighbours of Colchis, introducing the victims of their traffick through a convenient pass in the mountains. In fact, being like Poty and Anapa, situated in the vicinity of people given, from the earliest times, to selling their children and serfs, and from which the harems of Turkey have procured their favourites, and its palaces their mamlooks for ages; the Turks made use of it for the same inhuman purposes as they did those fortresses. It is not, therefore, surprising, that, at the close of the late war, the Russians should, together with them, have retained it also, and the neighbouring fortresses of Azghoor and Akhalkalaki. Most of its Turkish inhabitants have retired to Erzroom and other parts of Turkey. It is 36 hours from Kars, and 34 from Tiflis; and I suppose the road from the former passes near Gümry, as we did not part company with the emigrating Armenians, till we crossed the Arpa-chai near that place.

The Russians, as they advanced into Turkey, left behind them, in order to facilitate the transmission of dispatches, a line of Cossack posts, which, in fact, was but an extension of the system of posts that exist throughout the trans-Caucasian provinces. From this establishment, the commandant of Kars, who treated us with much civility here, and, when we afterwards met him at another place, increased our obligations by additional attentions, politely offered to accommodate us with horses. Unable to procure other means of conveyance, we accepted his offer, and, receiving an order from the acting commander-in-chief, for as many as we needed



from every post, we started at 1 o'clock P.M. on the 2nd of July. Five large fat beasts carried our baggage and ourselves, and a hardy Cossack preceded us, in the capacity of guide, guard, and *sürüjy*. The plain of Kars, the same broad and fertile, but entirely uncultivated tract, continued to ascend gradually till we reached Khalfeh-oghloo, 22 versts from the city.\* It was a miserable ruined spot, of only 12 houses, half of which belonged to Armenians who had left. We stopped from 4 to 5 o'clock; and then, mounted on a new set of horses, and headed by a new Cossack, proceeded on our way. The plain beyond was covered with a fine growth of grass, but no where did any cultivation appear. We passed but one village, and that was uninhabited. Every feature of these great Armenian plains gives them a dreary aspect. With not a tree, not a fence, hardly a ploughed field, and a village only at long intervals, they present one wide waste of greenness almost like the ocean, and penetrate the mind with the deepest feelings of solitude. The melancholy is increased by the reflection, that the wickedness of man, exhibited in exterminating wars, and barbarous, blood-thirsty, and avaricious governments, has thus turned the most fruitful fields into deserts. We think that our own country is thinly peopled; but where can such a tract as the plain of Kars be found, with so few to cultivate it? Hardly one is so solitary and naked, short of the buffalo plains of Missouri. Our road, as darkness came on, was lined with encampments of emigrating Armenians. At 9 and a half P.M. we forded the river of Kars, and stopped at the village of Jamishly, on its left bank, having made 30 versts from our last post. It was an Armenian village of 30 families; but all had left for Georgia.

*July 3.* Immediately after starting, we left the river of Kars, running to the right towards the Aras, and saw no more of it. It is the same that was called Akhooreán by the Armenians, and the ruins of Ani are still found upon it, not many miles below. After an hour, another small river crossed our path, running also to the right, through lands on which appeared several villages. In three hours more we forded the Arpa-chai, and were on Russian soil.

\* The common Russian verst is equal to two-thirds of an English mile.



## LETTER VI.

## FROM THE TURKISH FRONTIER TO TIFLIS.

Enter the Russian possessions—Gümry—Valley and village of Pernikákh—A Sabbath—Village church—Number of the Armenian services—Their nature and spirit—Want of education—Hamamly—Intemperance—Quarantine—Russian army—Cossacks—Gérger—Lóri—Enter Georgia—Change of climate—Russian post establishment—Great Shoolaver—Greeks in Georgia—Post carriages—Reach Tiflis.

DEAR SIR,

WE had changed empires almost before we were aware of it. For both banks of the Arpa-chai have the same features of plain and gentle undulation, and the river itself is easily forded. Yet one side looks to Constantinople for its governors, and owns obedience to the laws and successors of Mohammed; while the other is ruled according to the maxims of Peter the Great, by one of his descendants, on the shores of the Baltic. The Arpa-chai has been the boundary of the two empires from the first subjection of Georgia to Russia; and is a most convenient one for the designs of an ambitious power, for it opposes not the shadow of a barrier to the advance of her armies. Waving fields of barley, on its eastern bank, interspersed with meadows now bowing before the scythe of the mower, attracted our attention before we knew that they were in another empire; and, at our first introduction to Russia, prepossessed us in favour of the protecting and meliorating influence of her laws. As we approached Gümry, about two miles from the river, an officer of a regiment encamped by the path, rode up and examined our passports a moment; and this was the only police or custom-house inspection we underwent on entering the territories of the Czar.

Gümry is a small Armenian village 30 versts from Jamishly. Unfortunately it was too far from the Cossack encampment to allow us to visit it. The underground houses of the Cossacks were so dirty, that we preferred spreading our carpets on the open ground, notwithstanding the mid-day sun was somewhat oppressive, to entering them; and as nothing could be obtained to eat, we improved the two or three hours of our delay, by endeavouring to sleep. The highest peak of a snowy mountain, that had bounded our prospect



at some distance to the right, during the morning, bore, from this spot, south-east. It is now called Alagez, and both its position and its name show it to be the same that Armenian history often mentions under the name of Arakádz.

Passing for three hours over the level and fertile plain of Gümry, we reached a low mountain that connects the one just mentioned with others on the left, and easily ascended it by a carriage road. It forms the natural boundary of the territory of Kars, and was formerly the dividing line between the provinces of Ararád and Kookárk. It actually separates the waters of the Aras from those of the Koor. Beyond lay the little valley of Pernikákh, the beginning of the district of Pembék, the ancient Pampegidzor. Long fields of barley, meadows, and ploughed lots lying side by side, unseparated by hedge or fence, decked it with the variegated colours of a beautiful carpet. The barley was in blossom; companies of mowers were cutting the thick grass of the meadows; and teams of ten and twelve pairs of cattle were turning up the black loam of the ploughed fields. The ploughs were of astonishing size and weight, but of the form common in Turkey; consisting of a straight billet of wood, pointed with a sharp iron the more easily to penetrate the ground, having a beam attached to it by which to be drawn, and a handle for the ploughman. Enormous as it was, however, and moved by so great a power, it was far from fathoming the depth of the soil. The costume of the peasants gave us additional evidence that we were no longer in Turkey. Instead of the Osmánly turban, flowing *caftán* (gown), and ample *shalwár* (trowsers), nothing appeared but the conical sheepskin cap, the snug frock and frock-coat, and wide pantaloons of Georgia. A ride of four or five miles across the valley, in the course of which we passed a brook running through it on its way to the Koor, brought us to the village of Pernikákh, called also Beykénd, 27 versts from Gümry.

*July 4.* I awoke with strong feverish sensations, arising from exposure to the sun and wind of yesterday, and still more from the confined air and horrible stench of our room in the night. It was a stable, entered by a passage so dark, that even in the day time we could hardly find our way through it, and ventilated only by a hole in the terrace hardly four inches square. In it horses, calves, and hens herded with us; and dirt was constantly falling from the terrace in the night, to the great danger of our eyes. It being



Sabbath, we gave notice at the post-house that we should remain until to-morrow, and walked out to breathe. The weather was delightfully pleasant, and the fresh morning air soon dissipated my headache, and calmed my feverish pulse. None of the bustle of industry that was witnessed yesterday, although it was the festival of Loosavorích, a high holiday of the church, now appeared. In the village, however, lamentable evidence was afforded us, that, though labour was suspended, nothing was thought of the sacredness of the day. Some were going to a distant village on business; others were meeting with their friends to amuse themselves with music, and carouse over a bowl of punch; and others still were lounging away their time with their pipes, or in sleep. How lamentable their condition! Without the Bible, and unable to read if they had it; without early instruction, or the ministrations of the pulpit; what means have they, on this day of rest, of feeding the appetite of the soul for action, but to indulge in amusements and sin?

We attended evening prayers in the church. Hitherto we had seen no village in Armenia possessed of a church that was distinguished from the common houses, by form or size, or any external mark that could inform the traveller that it was a church; and the same is true of the parts of Turkish Armenia which we afterwards visited. But within the Russian limits, most Christian villages shewed us a church, in some cases ancient and well built, as far as they could themselves be seen. The church of Pernikákh was built of stone, and stood fairly above the ground, in the most elevated part of the village. A bell, too, that insufferable abomination to the Turk, called the people to the worship of God. The sun was shining clearly without, but the darkness within was so great, that we could with difficulty distinguish a single individual. For, even were it in the open sunshine, the service could not be read without lighted candles, symbolical of the "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven spirits of God," and indicating the need of the Spirit to aid in divine worship. The villagers here, therefore, as in many other places which we visited, had concluded, that, as the necessity of daylight was superseded, they were at liberty to make an economical saving of window-glass and of their own animal heat, by substituting for windows crevices hardly more than an inch wide, and thus almost entirely excluding it. How perfectly descriptive of the present state of their religion! In

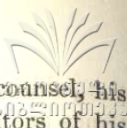


the public celebration of a worship that has substituted the doctrines and commands of men for the Word of God, and the mediation of saints and angels for that of the only Mediator between God and man, the light of a taper is well substituted for the light of the sun!

Reserving for another place a description of the Armenian forms of worship, permit me to inform you here of what that worship consists. The Armenian ritual designates nine distinct hours every day for public worship, and contains the services for them, viz. *midnight*, the hour of Christ's resurrection; the *dawn of day*, when he appeared to the two Marys at the sepulchre; *sunrise*, when he appeared to his disciples; *three o'clock* (reckoning from sunrise), or the first canonical hour, when he was nailed to the cross; *six o'clock*, or the second canonical hour, when the darkness over all the earth, commenced; *nine o'clock*, or the third canonical hour, when he gave up the ghost; *evening*, when he was taken from the cross and buried; *after the latter*, when he descended to hades to deliver the spirits in prison; and *on going to bed*. But never, except perhaps in the case of some ascetics, are religious services performed so often. All but the ninth are usually said at twice, viz. at matins and vespers, which are performed daily in every place that has a priest; the former commencing at the dawn of day, and embracing the first six services, and the latter commencing about an hour before sunset, and embracing the seventh and eighth. On the Sabbath, and on some of the principal holidays, instead of one, there are frequently two assemblies in the morning; the first at the dawn, embracing the first three services, and the other not far from nine o'clock, embracing the second three. Mass is as distinct from these services, as the communion service of the church of England is from the morning prayer. Whenever it is said, which is generally every day, it follows the sixth service; so that if there are two assemblies in the morning, it finishes the second. The ninth service, when it is performed at all, except in some convents, is said by individuals at home.\*

At the beginning of the first service in the morning, or rather, before it begins, the priest, standing with his face to the west, says,

\* The books which are used in these daily devotions of the church, are the *Jamakirk* (church-book), containing the nine services just enumerated; the *Sharagan*, containing hymns or anthems: the *Saghmós*, or Psalms of David; the *Jashóts*, containing select lessons from the Prophets, Gospels, and Epistles; and the *Haismarórk*, containing legends of the saints arranged in the order of the calendar. Besides which, there is also the *Khorhurtáder* for the mass, and the *Mashóts* for the other sacraments and rites of the church.



“We renounce the devil and all his arts and wiles, his counsel, his ways, his evil angels, his evil ministers, the evil executors of his will, and all his evil power, renouncing, we renounce.” Then turning toward the east\*, he repeats the following creed; which, as it is peculiar to the Armenian church, and is appealed to by papists and others, as evidence of her heresy, I give verbatim, omitting a few expressions which decency forbids to be published. “We confess and believe with the whole heart in God the Father, uncreated, unbegotten, and without beginning; both begetter of the Son, and sender [literally *proceeder*] of the Holy Ghost. We believe in God the Word, uncreated, begotten and begun of the Father before all eternity; not posterior nor younger, but as long as the Father [is] Father, the Son [is] Son with him. We believe in God the Holy Ghost, uncreated, eternal, unbegotten, but proceeding from the Father, partaking of the Father’s essence and of the Son’s glory. We believe in the Holy Trinity, one substance, one divinity, not three Gods but one God, one will, one kingdom, one dominion, Creator of things visible and invisible. We believe in the forgiveness of sins in the holy church, with the communion of saints. We believe that one of the three Persons, God the Word, was before all eternity begotten of the Father, in time descended \*\*\*\*, and perfect God, became perfect man, with spirit, soul, and body, one person, one attribute, and one united nature; God become man without change and without variation \*\*\*\*. As there is no beginning of his divinity, so there is no end of his humanity (for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever). We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ dwelt upon the earth; after thirty years he came to baptism; the Father testified from above, ‘This is my beloved son;’ the Holy Ghost like a dove descended upon him; he was tempted of the devil and overcame him; he preached salvation to men; was fatigued and wearied in body; hungered and thirsted; afterwards voluntarily came to suffering; was crucified and dead in body, and alive in divinity; his body was placed in the grave with the divinity united; and in spirit he descended to hades with the divinity unseparated, preached to the spirits, destroyed hades, and delivered the spirits; after three days arose from the dead, and appeared to the disciples. We

\* He holds his hands open at the height of his breast, with the palms downward and the fore-fingers in contact; this being the sign of the Christian faith, as placing the fore-fingers alone in contact is of the Mohammedan faith.



believe that our Lord Jesus Christ with that same body ascended to heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father; he is also to come with the same body, and with the Father's glory, to judge the quick and the dead. Which is likewise a resurrection to all men. We believe also in the reward of works, to the righteous everlasting life, and to the wicked everlasting punishment." After this creed, some of the peculiarities of which will come under review hereafter, an abominable form of confession and absolution is said for the congregation, which I neglect to quote here, as it will come up again when we have occasion to speak of the sacrament of penance.\*

You would be little interested or profited were I to enumerate the exhortations, supplications, prayers, responses, psalms, lessons, hymns, and anthems, which follow in order. They are varied to suit different festivals, fasts, days of the month, and other special occasions. The Psalms of David, hymns, and anthems, constitute much more than half of the services, but they are not in metre, and regular tunes are unknown; only chants being sung according to tones marked by a variety of curious signs attached to the words in the service books. The lessons are chiefly taken from the canonical books of the Bible, and are of course good. But aside from them and the Psalms, there is a lamentable dearth of matter to gratify an evangelical and scriptural taste, and very much that is positively and radically objectionable. The book of legends, parts of which are generally read at least once a day, is an enormous bundle of the grossest fabrications that were ever laid upon the shoulders of the saints.† The apocryphal prayer of the Three Children, and that of king Manasseh, form prominent and essential parts of the second morning service. Besides prayers, lessons, anthems, and the like, specially for the dead, which are very numerous, single petitions for the same object are interspersed through almost every other part of the services.

Other mediators are adopted so entirely to the exclusion of the only Mediator between God and man, that, aided even by Bishop Dionysius, I have been unable to find a trace of the intercession of Christ. His promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you," seems to be entirely forgotten. Instead of his

\* Jamakirk, p. 3—10.

† It is a folio of about 2,000 pages.



name, we hear, on the saints' days, the following: "Through the intercession of the holy mother of God, and of John the Baptist, and of St. Stephen the proto-martyr, and of St. Gregory Loosavorich; through the memory and prayer of the saints this day commemorated; and for the sake of thy precious cross, O Lord, accept our entreaties and make us live." To the Virgin petitions like the following are directly addressed. "O holy mother of God, thee do we supplicate; intercede with Christ to save his people whom he has bought with his own blood." "Mother of God, immaculate mother of the Lord, and holy virgin, intercede with thine only born son, that he may save us from the threatening of hell, and grant us the kingdom of heaven, and may give peace to the spirits of our dead." Nor are we to suppose, that the saints are considered only as secondary mediators between us and the Son, while he alone still intercedes with the Father, for such expressions as the following forbid it. "Let us make the holy mother of God and all the saints intercessors with the Father in heaven, that he will be pleased to have mercy, and, pitying, will give life to his creatures." "O Lord, through the intercession of the immaculate parent of thine only begotten Son, the holy mother of God, and the entreaties of all thy saints, and of those who are commemorated this day, accept our prayers."

Many prayers are indeed addressed directly to the Son, but by what arguments are they supported? Take the following: "O gracious Lord, for the sake of thy holy, immaculate, and virgin mother, and of thy precious cross, accept our prayer and make us live." Other strange language respecting the cross has been already quoted. I have turned for something more grateful to the prayer of Nerses Shnorhali, which forms a prominent part of the ninth service, and is probably more highly esteemed than any other prayer in the offices of the Armenian church\*; but how chilling is the following termination: "O gracious Lord, accept the supplication of me, thy servant, and fulfil my petitions for my good, through the intercession of the holy mother of God, and John the Baptist, and St. Stephen the proto-martyr, and St. Gregory Loosavorich, and the holy apostles, and prophets, and preachers, and martyrs, and patriarchs, and hermits, and virgins, and all the saints in heaven and on earth!" I shall be gratified

\* It has been beautifully printed at Venice in twenty-four different languages.



should other inquiries, more successful than mine, prove, that the offices of the church do sometimes recognise the fact, that Christ is even at the right hand of God, making intercession for us.

I am unwilling to take leave of the Armenian prayer book, without allowing it a chance to exhibit, by the side of such vital errors and defects, some real excellencies. The following prayer is from the midnight service, and is probably one of the oldest in the Jamakirk. "O Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of all existences visible and invisible, to thee do we always pray, for thy dominion is in every place, and thy kingdom ruleth over all. Grant us grace to rise early for thy service with fear; to love thee with the whole heart and mind; to keep thy commands with our whole strength; to raise our hands with holiness unto thee without wrath and doubting; and to find grace and mercy with thee, and success in virtuous deeds. For thou art the Lord of life and the God of mercies, and to thee belong glory, and dominion, and honour, now and always, and for ever and ever. Amen. (Peace be to all: let us worship God.)\* To thy mighty and powerful dominion all bow the knee and worship, and thy majesty is glorified by all. Behold our worship, and teach us to do the righteousness of truth. For thou art the God of peace, who hast taken the enmity away, and made peace in heaven and on earth, and published to them that are afar off and to them that are nigh the new gifts of thy goodness. Make us also worthy of that thy great grace, ranking us among thy sincere worshippers, O our God, our Lord, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Thou, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, art glorious now, and always, and for ever and ever. Amen."

We stopped after service was ended to converse awhile with the priests. As usual, we found much difficulty in introducing ourselves intelligibly, for although they had heard of the New World, they had not the least information respecting it, not even of its situation. For they supposed it to be near Constantinople, that being the *ultima Thule* of their geographical knowledge, and knew not whether it was inhabited by Christians, Turks, or Pagans. Their curiosity, however, prompted but few questions, and soon left us at liberty to direct the conversation as we pleased. For schools

\* This expression occurs in the middle of all prayers of any length, and is uttered by the priest, turning round and waving the cross over the congregation.



they referred us to Tiflis, and declared that there were none either here or in the neighbouring villages. They, however, themselves taught some two or three children each; but when asked how many in the village could read and write, their only answer was that there were no writers. In fact, the art of writing hardly comes within the scope of the education which appears to be given by the priests of most villages to a few individuals; for its object is merely to provide readers for the church and candidates for the ministry, and these offices can be discharged by those who are merely able to read. The few children thus taught are never regarded as forming a school. We urged the utility of schools, and gave an account of our own, both for males and females. They seemed unable to conceive how they could be useful to any but those who intended to be priests; and finally excused themselves by saying their nation had no king. We told them that neither had our own, and that kings did not always make schools. The subject was evidently irksome, and the first opportunity was seized to change it.

Pernikákh is inhabited entirely by Armenians, and contains about 100 houses, with one church and four priests. It enjoys great quiet under the Russian government, being never visited by Kürds, nor any other disturbers of public security, especially since Eriván has passed into the hands of the emperor.

*July 5.* A ride of 15 versts brought us to our next post at Hamamly, a village in an open cultivated valley which is separated by hills from the plain of Pernikákh. It is composed of about 80 Armenian houses. Near the post-house was an establishment which we were at a loss whether to name a dram-shop or a victualling-house. Whichever it might be, it was equally a new sight for an Armenian village, but soon became familiar. We succeeded tolerably at this in satisfying our hunger; but in similar establishments afterward, we found the other appetite almost exclusively provided for. In fact, I may here remark in general, that the Armenians of these provinces, wherever their situation gives them access to strong drink, frequently indulge in it to excess, and though sottish drunkenness is not common, instances of it do occur. In their feast, which, being given at births, marriages, masses for the dead, and other similar occasions, frequently occur, they almost invariably both eat and drink to excess, and the quantity of wine that is swallowed is perfectly incredible. Public opinion does indeed





stamp a drunkard as a vicious man ; but to drink for the sake of merriment is considered a privilege of the Christian religion, and an important advantage which it has over Mohammedanism.

After an hour's delay in changing horses, we proceeded, following, over a broken surface, the course of the stream we had first crossed in the valley of Pernikákh. Our next post, 17 versts from the last, consisted of only a few Cossack cabins, and I shall not trouble you with its name. One or two villages, however, were in sight. The mountains which enclose the valley of the river we had been following, lost at Hamamly their smooth and swelling form, and began to exhibit on their sides, and in their ravines, a few clumps of bushes. Here many trees appeared upon them, and their height too was become considerable. That on the right, where the river passes off through an intricate ravine on its way to the Koor, had its top covered with snow. Bears, wolves, deer, wild goats, and wild sheep range over them.

We turned to the left, to pass over a mountain into the valley of another branch of the same stream. A little church on an isolated hill reminds me to tell you, that the Armenians have desert churches in mountains and retired places distant from any habitations ; but not so many as the Greeks and Georgians. This was the second we had noticed. Service is performed in them only on festival occasions, when those who attend frequently sacrifice an animal for a feast, and spend the day in carousing among the rocks. On entering a ravine, about two miles from the post, we observed a copious mineral spring in the middle of the path, from which issued a large quantity of gas. It was surrounded by old foundations of hewn stone. The ravine was rendered refreshing by its coolness, and beautiful by a forest of maple, ash, oak, elm, and other trees, which clothed, and a great variety of charming flowers which ornamented its sides. We had not seen a forest tree for the last 120 miles. Following the ravine, we were conducted finally by a steep ascent to the top of the mountain, which bounds in this direction the district of Pembék. On the opposite side was the district of Lóri, presenting a mountainous prospect, with the little valley of Gérger directly below us. We descended toward it, and at the foot of the mountain were arrested by a sanitary cordon, to perform fifteen days of quarantine, before proceeding farther in the Russian territories. Our last stage was 16 versts.

Gümry is the place where quarantine is usually performed



on entering Georgia; but, for the accommodation of the army, which was at this time retiring from Turkey, the sanitary establishment was now removed to this place. The change was a most agreeable one for us. Instead of a naked and peculiarly uninteresting spot, where we could hardly have got even wood for kitchen purposes, we were located in the midst of scenery of peculiar beauty. It was a dell connected with the valley of G rger on the north, bounded on either side by high hills, and terminating in the thick forests of the mountain to the south, from whence flowed through it three rivulets of the purest water. The atmosphere was purified by frequent thunder showers; vegetation was in its most thriving state; and so cool was the climate that the thermometer ranged at mid-day in the open shade, from 60  to 75 , and at sunset was often down to 53 . In it were encamped from eight to ten thousand of the army, to undergo the same purgatorial imprisonment as ourselves. Their presence caused us to be provided with comfortable accommodations and means of subsistence. For the Russian quarantine establishments, on the side of Turkey and Persia, are furnished with no lazaretto buildings, and make little or no provision for the table of the traveller. It is almost as if he were set down in an open field, and left to manage as best he can for shelter and for food. We have found persons sentenced to a quarantine of ten days or a fortnight, where, they assured us, they could with difficulty procure a piece of bread. At this place there was no village, nor lazaretto, nor, but for the presence of the army, would there have been any market. As it was, however, we found a shop open, at which all necessary provisions could be procured; and, after being the first day reduced almost to the alternative of fasting, or doing the duties of the kitchen ourselves, we succeeded in converting an Armenian blacksmith into a cook, and had no farther ground of complaint on the score of food.

For our lodgings we were indebted to the politeness of Gen. R., who was the commanding officer on the ground, and for whom we had, without knowing it, brought a letter from Gen. Pankratieff at Kars. From our first interview with the latter, he had discovered no disposition to shew us attentions, and it was not without surprise that, on the morning we left Kars, we received a letter from the hand of a soldier, with the information that it was from the general to an officer at G rger, whom we should find of use to us.



The soldier we took to be one of those gentlemen of distinction who were condemned to the ranks by the Emperor Nicholas for the insurrection that occurred at his accession. Many of them are in the army of the Caucasus, and, when they happen to be under the command of liberal-minded officers, are treated with some indulgence. We had previously met him at the lodgings of the commandant of Kars, and were after all left in doubt whether the parcel was not from himself. However that may be, it contained letters to two officers, from both of whom we received many civilities, and one of whom was Gen. R. He called upon us repeatedly with his staff, and gave us a large tent, which was already pitched in a quiet and central position, with a fine arbour before it, and formed the most eligible lodgings in the camp. We shall have more than one occasion to speak of Gen. R.'s kind attentions after leaving Gérger, and it gives me pleasure to add, that, though a papist, we found him well known at Shoosha as a friend of the missionaries. He was a Pole.

Our quarantine, unlike the one in Kars, was in sober earnest. All our baggage was, on the second day, suspended piece by piece in a smoke-house, for eight hours, to be fumigated; the clothes we had on were then left to undergo the same process during the night; and at the end, the doctor would not give us *pratique* until he had actually examined our bodies to find if they exhibited no symptoms of the plague! Common people were almost daily made to undergo the same *visit* in the open air before his lodgings! The principal reliance, however, seemed to be on the fumigation and the final visit, for we were left the whole time without a guardian. Persons of a different quarantine repeatedly came into our tent, and we could wander over the mountains as far as we chose with none to *guard* us. Such liberty enabled us to pass away our fortnight very agreeably, but it certainly destroyed all effective quarantine. I ought to add, that, if our quarantine was worth nothing, it cost nothing except time; for on asking for the bill of charges at the end, we were told that there were none.

Our camp life and other intercourse with the army, gave us considerable acquaintance with the Russian soldiery. Their coarse dress, leathery face, and clownish manners, stood out in strong contrast to the gentlemanly appearance of the English garrison at Malta, from which my first and latest ideas of military life had been derived. Their treatment by their superiors partook largely

of servitude and barbarism. When conversing with, or passing an officer, their head was invariably completely uncovered, while his hat remained untouched; and when smoking their pipes at the commencement of their quarantine, whole companies were marched, perfectly naked, a quarter of a mile before the encampment.

With the Cossacks we had much to do in the course of our journey, and our opinion of them continued to the last to improve. Their name will always recal the impression made upon me by the first I ever saw. He met us the morning we reached Erzroom, as we were making our way through a dense fog. In a clear atmosphere, large as he really was, and mounted upon a tall and stately horse, with a spear at least twelve feet long projecting on one side, a rifle slung upon his back on the other, a heavy sword by his side, and a brace of pistols in his girdle, he would have appeared sufficiently formidable; but, magnified by the mist to a gigantic size, he seemed almost like Mars himself. Though they speak the same language, and profess the same religion as the Russians, they are a distinct nation, with their own peculiar institutions and rights; for they pay no taxes to the emperor, and in their territories on the Don, no Russian holds an office, or exercises authority. But the emperor claims from them a military service, which obliges every man to alternate three years at home, and three years in the field, and, in fact, converts the whole nation of more than 200,000 individuals into a standing army. They are perfectly undisciplined: we never saw a Cossack drilling. In their marches they have none but vocal music, led by singers in front, and more thrilling notes are rarely formed by voice or instrument, than those that compose Cossack airs. With the exception of some half a dozen supernumerary horses to a regiment, which carry the effects of the superior officers, there is no lumber of baggage. Every man has his own, which is little more than a coat and a pot, with a sieve, or a fiddle, or some other implement of utility or amusement, hung to his saddle. We loved to contrast this truly military contempt of encumbering conveniences, with the baggage of the regular regiments; in which was found a coach, or a phaeton for almost every officer. The cavalry of this army consisted entirely of Cossacks; and we were amused to see how soon, after a body of them came upon the quarantine ground, they were all provided with shelters. Low arbours, formed of the boughs of trees, were covered with earth, and in one day every mess had a hut. For his soldier-like



character exclusively, some might admire the Cossack ; but his sobriety and independence, tempered with real kindness of heart, and a sense of what is just and right, were the traits that interested us. Our interest was increased by learning, that, though the nation is encumbered with the ceremonies of the Greek church, it exhibits frequent individual instances of a simplicity of religious feeling, that is rare among others of the same communion.

*July 20.* For the last few days, frequent showers had thoroughly wetted our tent every night, and reduced the temperature of the atmosphere to an almost uncomfortable degree; but this morning the sky was clear, and, though the thermometer stood at 39°, the weather was fine for resuming our journey. At the village of Génger, perhaps half a mile from the encampment, a sufficient number of horses were not to be had, and, finally, the Cossack who was to be our guide, consented to walk the whole stage rather than detain us. The village contained a small Russian barrack, and seemed chiefly composed of persons attached to the army. Several others are scattered through the valley, and inhabited exclusively by Armenians. After tracing the valley for a short distance to the west, we crossed a hill that separates it from the valley of Lóri on the north, and came to our next post at Jelál-oghloo, after riding only 12 versts. Its population resembled that of Génger, though the proportion of Russians and military men seemed greater. The valley follows the course of a river that passes near the village, and, not far below, unites with that of Génger. About a mile to the east, and on the banks of the same stream, appeared the ruins of Lóri ; a fortress often mentioned in the history of Armenia, especially during the reign of the Pakradians, and the invasions of the Seljookians and Moghúls. It was the chief place of the canton of Dashir, and, in fact, of the province of Kookárk, and when the Georgian branch of the Pakradian family assumed, in the tenth century, the independent government of this region, under the title of kings of the Aghováns, it became their capital.\* Its name still remains, and is given also to the whole district.

On starting again, we found it a business of labour and time to cross the river mentioned above. For, although the land on both sides is nearly a perfect plain, it runs through a profound ravine, formed of precipitous ledges of rocks, to be descended and ascended in crossing it. Its water was extremely transparent, and rolled

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 80, 85, 222, 365 ; vol. 2, p. 79.



rapidly over a rocky bed furnishing a retreat doubtless to multitudes of trout, of some of which we had had a taste during our quarantine imprisonment. It is the principal branch of the river of which the brook of Pernikákh is a tributary. Some distance farther down in its course toward the Koor, it passes near the two convents of Sanahín and Haghpád, both much distinguished in the ecclesiastical history of Armenia, and the latter of which will be again referred to as still an important establishment. We took a northward direction over a rich meadow land, among the thick grass and variegated flowers of which, a regiment of Cossacks were gathering strawberries. It was the first fruit we had seen growing, in travelling 300 miles, since we entered Armenia, and this was yet hardly ripe. Two or three hours from Jelál-oghloo were two villages at a small distance from the road, inhabited, like most in this district, by Armenians, and in each the remains of an ancient church rose high above all the other buildings. Around them were extensive tracts cultivated with grain, which was not yet in the ear, an indication of an extremely cold climate. We found our post, after a stage of 20 versts, at a distance from any village. But, though a mere Cossack station, it furnished us with a better dinner than we could have procured at the last village, for that had offered nothing for our refreshment but inebriating liquors and salt fish. Our room, too, was uncommonly decent, having at least one regular paper window, and what was the greatest rarity, a bedstead, though unfortunately the only bed upon it was a handful of loose hay. It was a Russian luxury; we had seen nothing of the kind since leaving Constantinople.

*July 21.* We arose chilled with the cold, and getting under way at 6 A.M. found ourselves, after an hour's ride, on the northern verge of the mountains over which we had been travelling from Gümry. Extending to the right, they fill the space between the Aras and the Koor, nearly to their junction; in which vicinity we shall take another view of them on our way to Nakhcheván. It was not simply these, however, that we had now to descend; for the prospect before us shewed that we were to bid adieu entirely to the elevated plateau, whose cold climate and verdant plains and mountains we had enjoyed since long before crossing the western boundary of Armenia. From our elevated position we looked down upon a broad, and, indeed, to our limited vision, boundless valley, brown throughout with sun-burnt fields, giving us no very pleasing anti-



cipations of the climate from which they had derived their colour. It was the valley of the Koor. Beyond it, a long line of bright clouds in the horizon marked out the position, as we supposed, of mount Caucasus, but not a point of it was visible.

Such was our first view of Georgia; for the declivity of the mountain before us was once the boundary between that country and Armenia. Though it presented no very inviting distant prospect, our introduction to it was most delightful. Extensive and luxuriant forests reached the whole distance from us to the plain below. Guided by a Georgian *sürijy*, the first of that nation we had found, and following, along the ravine of a mountain torrent, the carriage road on which we had travelled from Gümry, we glided rapidly downward under the shade, first of the beech, maple, elm, and sumach, and, after a while, also, of the oak, wild pear, and hawthorn, forming an almost unbroken forest to our next post, a distance of 15 versts. It was called Samiski; but no village was near, and only a shop was at hand to offer us the usual variety of spirits, wine, and coarse bread. Our next post was at the foot of the mountain, 18 versts distant; and we reached it at half past 1 P.M. How great the change of climate since 6 o'clock in the morning! Less than 7 hours ride over a distance of 22 miles had transferred us, almost from a frosty spring morning into a mid-day summer's sun; and every thing around shewed that the increase of temperature which we felt was not an accidental variation that might happen any where, but a real change of climate. In the morning the fields were covered with verdure kept continually fresh by frequent thunder showers; now every spire of grass was as withered and brown as if there had been no rain for months. There the ears of grain had hardly begun to appear; here we were in the midst of harvest!

*July 22.* We were detained until 10 A.M. for want of horses. I have mentioned that we left Kars with the horses of Cossacks, and had Cossacks for guides. On advancing farther into the Russian territories, we found at each station a separate set of horses for post purposes, immediately superintended, and, perhaps, owned by a native of the country. Instead of a Cossack, too, a native acted as guide and *sürijy*. Still every post-house was a station of Cossacks, who were its responsible directors, and bound, in case of need, to furnish their own horses. Such an exigency occurred today, for though the post horses were gone, those of the Cossacks



were in the stable. We could hardly blame their masters, <sup>941936320</sup> ~~how~~ ever, for withholding them, as they were their private property; it being a condition of their military service that they furnish their own horses. Besides being thus connected with the posts in every part of these provinces, the Cossacks form stations of police guards, and in that capacity are obliged to accompany travellers wherever there is danger. For it is a singular part of the Russian post system, that no one who avails himself of it, is allowed to expose himself to robbers or enemies without a competent guard.

A Russian post, as it usually appears here, is a quadrangular, wattled enclosure, entered by a wide gate with a row of Cossack spears standing near it in front, and having two long buildings for the Cossacks on either side, with another for their horses on the back. Sometimes, however, the beasts alone are decently provided for, while the men have only little huts sunk completely under ground. The traveller will generally find a room furnished with at least a platform of loose slabs, a foot or two from the ground, instead of a bed. With all its imperfections, we found the Russian post a more eligible mode of travelling than any other that we tried in our journey. It was sufficiently expeditious, and still allowed us to stop as often and as long as we chose, and withal was cheap. We paid only two copecks, or about a cent and a half, the verst, for each horse, nothing being charged for the Cossack and *sürijy*, or their horses. I ought to add, to the praise of the former, that no Cossack ever solicited us for a present, or seemed to expect one, nor indeed did the *sürijies* till to-day. The greatest inconvenience we found, was, that the posts never furnished provisions, and were often so far from any village, as to oblige us to fast longer than was agreeable, unless we carried our own food. To-day, we could not procure even a morsel of bread nearer than two versts.

I know not how long we should have been detained had not Gen. R., with the same politeness that we experienced from him at Génger, helped us onward. Happening to pass with a division of the army, and seeing us at the door, he rode up to inquire the cause of our detention. The Cossacks were immediately ordered to furnish their own horses for our service, and in a few minutes we were moving at a rapid rate toward Tiflis. A ride of two versts brought us to Great Shoolaver, a village of perhaps 150 houses, and the chief place of the district. It was surrounded by extensive



vineyards and gardens of fruit trees ; an additional testimony that we had left the cold climate of Armenia. The Armenians themselves, however, we had not yet left, for most of its inhabitants were of that nation. Its houses, too, like those of Armenia, were under ground.

Near Great Shoolaver there is a village of Greeks, and I will stop a moment to record what we heard of the few of that nation which are to be found in the trans-Caucasian provinces east of Imireti. We saw none, except a few merchants at Tiflis. The following are all that we heard of, viz. one village named Simskár, between Elizabeththal and Katherinenfeld, two German colonies south-west of Tiflis ; another near Great Shoolaver ; a third between Jelál-oghloo and Haghpád ; a fourth at the copper mines near Haghpád ; and a fifth, named Baindoor, near Gümry, on the Arpa-chai. They speak a dialect of modern Greek, much corrupted by Turkish, and write Greco-Turkish, i. e. Turkish with the Greek letters. Their liturgy is in ancient Greek, but they use the Venice edition of the Greco-Turkish New Testament and Psalter, of which, however, they have but very few copies. At the request of Mr. Zarembo, the gentleman who gave us this information, we have taken measures to have them supplied with the British and Foreign Bible Society's edition. To their number may now be added the former Greek population of Erzroom, whom the Russians have located in the little district of Trialéti, near Akhaltsikhe.

One extensive plain, of a somewhat undulating surface, interrupted by only a few small hills, reaches from Great Shoolaver to the Koor, in the direction of our route, and stretches off to the right as far as the eye can see. It is intersected by several rivers running toward the Koor, the largest of which, the Khram or Ktsia, we forded 10 versts from our post. Almost the whole of it was one vast field of wheat, which the peasants were now harvesting ; and the uncommon height of the stalk and weight of the ear, shewed that a fruitful soil had well repaid their labour. Many villages appeared in different directions, and were generally surrounded with vineyards, fruit trees, and poplars, the rich verdure of which, presenting a strong contrast to the universally sun-burnt fields around, gave them, at a distance, a most inviting appearance. They proved, however, upon a nearer inspection, to be small and poorly built.

At one of them, named Kote, we found our post-house, after a



stage of 27 versts ; and from thence took post waggons. We had found the first of these vehicles at Samiski, two stages back ; but they seemed so uncomfortable and awkward, that we preferred to continue on horseback, and took only one for our baggage. Indeed I am not sure but shame contributed more than any thing to this decision, for we felt that, mounted in such clumsy machines, we should be a fair laughing-stock for a whole regiment of Russians that were encamped near. Familiarity with the sight, however, and especially the rapidity with which we could thus travel, had, at the end of two stages, overcome all our scruples, and we now took one for ourselves, as well as for our baggage. They consisted of a rough semi-cylindrical body, hardly more than six feet long by three in diameter, attached without springs to the wheels, and drawn by three or four horses abreast, the middle one of which had a bow projecting high above his head, with a bell suspended from the centre of the arch. With such accommodations, than which we were assured the posts in Russia itself rarely furnish better, we proceeded on, as fast as the horses, guided by a rough Russian driver, could carry us, over hills and stones, till our eyes were too nearly jolted from their sockets for us to see with much accuracy what we passed. Yet, even in this outlandish situation, a meadow covered with hay-cocks and a regular load of hay, the first I had seen for four years, brought up before us for a moment, the sweet associations of home. We observed, too, a short distance from Kote, a small pond, with what seemed a thick incrustation of salt upon its shore, but we had no time to examine it. After a stage of only 11 versts, we changed again at Telet, an isolated post-house 14 versts from Tiflis. Four versts beyond, we came upon the bank of the Koor, and then, following up its stream to the left, along the valley through which it here runs, the remainder of the way, we reached the city at dark. A bare examination of our bill of health from Gérger, satisfied the quarantine guard ; our assertion that we had nothing but our own travelling baggage was all that was demanded by the inspector of customs ; the keeper of the gate, if a single pole thrown across the path may be so named, merely demanded our names and nation ; and thus easily we found ourselves fairly introduced into the capital of Georgia.



## LETTER V.

## TIFLIS.

Description of the city—Its taverns—River Koor—Climate—Different costumes—Police—Provinces of the Government of the Caucasus—Nature of the government—Influence of the Russians upon the intelligence and morals of the natives—Population of the city—Commercial character of the Armenians—Trade of these provinces—Intemperance—Archbishop Nérsés—His Armenian academy—Printing press—Armenian diocese of Georgia—Interview with Bishop Serope—Armenian gymnasium at Moscow—Armenian churches and forms of worship—Image worship—Protestant worship at New Tiflis—Observance of the Sabbath.

DEAR SIR, ✓

TIFLIS occupies the right bank of the Koor, in a contracted valley formed by irregular mountains parallel with the stream on the side of the city, and hills coming down in a point quite to the water's edge on the other. A circular fort covers this point, and, together with a small suburb, is united to the city by a bridge of a single wooden arch, thrown over the river, here confined to a narrow channel: while the ruined walls of an old citadel crown the top, and extend down the side of a part of the opposite mountain. The mountains and hills around exhibit only the cheerless prospect of perfectly naked rocks, and the only look-out they afford is toward the north, where the valley opens and discloses, at a distance of at least sixty miles, the snowy summit of mount Cazbék, one of the highest peaks of the Caucasus. The old and native part of the city is built upon the truly oriental plan of irregular narrow lanes, and still more irregular and diminutive houses, thrown together in all the endless combinations of accident. Here and there, European taste, aided by Russian power, has worked out a passable road for carriages, or built a decent house overlooking and putting to shame all its mud-walled and dirty neighbours. A line of bazárs, too, extending along the river, and branching out into several streets, together with much bustle and business, displays some neatness and taste; and is connected with two or three caravan-serais, one of which is the largest and best we have seen. Several old and substantial churches, displaying their cupolas and belfries in different parts, complete the prominent features of this part of the city. In the northern, or Russian quarter, officers' palaces,



government offices, and private houses, lining broad streets and open squares, have a decidedly European aspect, and exhibited in their pillared fronts something of that taste for showy architecture, which the edifices of their capital have taught the Russians to admire.

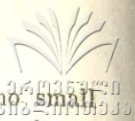
In a city possessed so long by Europeans, we had hoped for convenient accommodations, and had anticipated, with some pleasure, the luxury of a good bed at least, after having slept in our clothes every night since leaving Constantinople. The name of a tavern, also, was associated with ideas of travelling comforts which had not been awakened before. There were two in town, one with a French, and the other with a German landlord. We selected the former on the night of our arrival, as the most conveniently situated. Its dirty floors, looking as if they had never felt the effects of water, gave us, at our entrance, no very promising earnest of the rest of its conveniences; but extreme fatigue, and the lateness of the hour, made us hope that the beds would be better, and induced us soon to try them. Hardly was I snugly laid in mine, however, before it seemed more like a bed of nettles than of down. A whole army of blood-thirsty enemies attacked every assailable point, and forced me immediately to seek for quarters on the centre of the floor, the only place of refuge. Our rooms proved, in fact, absolutely uninhabitable, and we were obliged to seek new lodgings. The only alternative was the German inn. There, indeed, were none of our late enemy, but two others, which not even German neatness could exclude, annoyed us almost as much. Myriads of fleas swarmed in every corner, and constantly peopled our clothes with animated company; and a still greater number of flies, like another Egyptian plague, annoyed our faces and eyes every moment of the day. In the night we obtained some respite; for the darkness put the flies to sleep, and their more wakeful allies were avoided, in my case, in part, by carefully allowing none of the covering of my bed, by resting upon the floor, to serve as a ladder to conduct them to me; and entirely in that of my companion, who was less hardened to such annoyances, by securing himself in a night-dress sewed up at the hands and feet into a close bag. We should have preferred private rooms, not only for convenience, but also for economy, for our lodgings and board were exceedingly dear. But the same cause which had ruined the taverns by depriving them of patronage, had filled every disposable room, and none



could be procured. For the police takes upon itself the authority of quartering strangers, especially if they are officers, as most Europeans in the place are, in any house which it chooses; and as the army from Turkey was now fast assembling here, every nook was occupied. Indeed the city is generally very crowded, as is evidenced by the high rent of houses. Some which would no more than decently accommodate a respectable family, were pointed out to us as commanding a rent of six or seven hundred dollars.

Our lodgings were on the opposite side of the Koor from the city, and nearly on a level with its stream. That river, the ancient Cyrus, is here very muddy and rapid. Its rapidity is turned to a curious advantage as a moving power to floating mills, five of which, not far above our house, we had the curiosity to examine. A chain carried up the stream, and a timber resting against the bank, moored each of them safely at a distance from the shore. Three log canoes, fastened firmly to each other, upheld the building and its machinery, while a fourth supported the outer axle of the water-wheel, which played between it and the third. They seemed to be moved by a sufficient power, and, besides the extreme simplicity of their structure, had the great advantage of being above danger from floods. Not far below, several wheels were turned in the same way for watering gardens, the very buckets which raised the water being so constructed as to form also the paddles by which the wheels were turned. The turbidness of the river does not destroy its utility to the town; for every fountain and well partakes so strongly of the offensive mineral properties of the hot springs, that the water of the Koor alone can be used, and, like that of the Nile at Cairo, it is carried about the streets in skins, on animals, for sale. From its warm baths Tiflis is said to have taken its name, as *Tpilis-kalaki* means, in Georgian, the *warm city*; and they are so uniformly noticed by every ancient and modern traveller, that curiosity alone would have induced us to try them. We, of course, had little chance to judge of the effect of their mineral properties, except upon the olfactory nerves, which indicated, with sufficient distinctness, the presence of not a little sulphureted hydrogen. The water, as admitted into our apartment, was as far above blood heat as could be comfortably borne.

I should as soon suppose the name of Tiflis to be derived from its situation, as from its hot springs. For, surrounded as it is by naked mountains and hills, which cut off almost every wind, reflect



the rays of the sun, and become themselves radiators of no small portion of caloric, its atmosphere is always heated. In the winter, although in the latitude of New Haven, in Connecticut, Reaumeur's thermometer does not descend lower than  $3^{\circ}$  or  $4^{\circ}$ , and in the summer the air is excessively sultry. We did not learn, however, that bilious affections are decidedly among its endemical diseases; but inflammatory fevers, especially in the form which is commonly called a stroke of the sun, were said to be common. The absence of the former is doubtless owing to the extreme dryness of the soil and climate. For there is not a particle of stagnant water, nor any rank vegetation in the vicinity, and it rains on an average no more than thirty or forty days in a year. As an exception, however, to these remarks, which, according to the information we gathered, accurately describe the usual climate of Tiflis, I ought to state, that we did not find the weather intolerably hot, and, during our stay, there were several falls of rain, one of which continued, without intermission, for twenty-four hours, and raised the Koor seven or eight feet. To this may perhaps be attributed the unusual virulence of the cholera, which broke out shortly after.\*

Tiflis has the appearance of an excessively busy and populous place. Its streets present not only a crowded, but, unlike many oriental cities, a lively scene. Every person seems hurried by business. Nor is the variety of costumes, representing different nations and tongues, many of which are curious and strange, the least noticeable feature of the scene. The Russian soldier stands sentry at the corners of the streets, in a coarse great-coat, concealing the want of a better uniform, and even of decent clothing. The Russian subaltern jostles carelessly along in a little cloth cap, narrow-skirted coat, and tight pantaloons, with epaulettes dangling in front of naturally round shoulders. In perfect contrast to him stands the stately Turk, if not in person, yet represented by some emigrant Armenian, with turbanned head and bagging shalwár. The Georgian priest appears, cane in hand, with a green gown, long hair, and broad brimmed hat, while black flowing robes and a cylindrical lambskin cap mark his clerical brother of the Armenian

\* Mr. Dwight's meteorological table, during our stay from July 22nd to August 4th, made the highest temperature in the open shade at 7 A.M. to be  $78^{\circ}$ , the lowest  $61^{\circ}$ , and the average  $73^{\circ}$ . The highest temperature at 3 P.M. during the same time was  $87^{\circ}$ , the lowest  $66^{\circ}$ , and the average  $79^{\circ}$ . At 10 P.M. the highest was  $83^{\circ}$ , the lowest  $61^{\circ}$ , and the average  $74^{\circ}$ . On six days out of fourteen there were showers of rain, accompanied usually with strong northerly winds.



church. The dark Lesgy, with the two-edged *kama* (short sword), the most deadly of all instruments of death, dangling at his side, seems prowling for his victim as an avenger of blood. The city-bred Armenian merchant waits upon his customers, snugly dressed in an embroidered frock coat, gay calico frock, red silk shirt, and ample green trowsers also of silk. The tall lank Georgian peasant, with an upright conical sheepskin cap, and scantily clothed, looks as independent in his *yapanjy* (cloak of felt), as Diogenes in his tub. His old oppressor, the Persian, is known by more flowing robes, smoothly combed beard, and nicely dinted cap. In the midst of his swine appears the half-clad Mingrelian, with bonnet like a tortoise-shell tied loosely upon his head. And in a drove of spirited horses is a hardy mountaineer, whose round cap with a shaggy founce of sheepskin dangling over his eyes, and the breast of his coat wrought into a cartridge box, show him to be a Circassian. ✓

Of all this heterogeneous crowd, the Russian, being lord of the rest, demands our attention first in the narrative, as he did also in the journey. For, the morning after we arrived, our host, having already sent in our names to the authorities, informed us that, in obedience to the laws of the country, it was his duty to conduct us immediately to the police office. Fortunately we had provided ourselves with passports from the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, or we might have been embarrassed. For we learned here that the Emperor Alexander, in granting free trade to Georgia, had ordered that, to prevent persons suspected of bad principles from introducing themselves under the name of merchants, all foreigners should furnish themselves with passports from the foreign ministers of Russia. With the sight of these passports the police was immediately satisfied; we were only asked how long we intended to stop, and whither we were going next; and our passports were detained. Neither here, nor in any other place within the Russian territory, were our American passports inquired for. It was annoying to have police officers taking notes of us at every turn and stopping place in our journey; but they never shewed us any other than civil treatment, and, as their services were unasked, they were, as they ought to be, gratis. We were never charged a cent at any public office.

We made an early call upon General Strekaloff, the military governor, for whom we had a letter from the Russian minister at



the Porte. He was the second in rank of the Russian authorities, and we were not informed of the exact extent of his jurisdiction; though, at the time of our visit, he was acting in the place of his superior, Marshal Paskevich, the commander-in-chief of the government of the Caucasus, who was absent at St. Petersburg. The government of the Caucasus has its capital at Tiflis, but extends also to the north of the mountain from which it takes its name, and embraces there a tract reaching from the Caspian to the Black Sea. So that its commander-in-chief, besides the internal affairs of the government itself, has charge of the whole line of frontier posts, with which Russia has completely surrounded the mountain to check the predatory incursions of its unsubdued and barbarous tribes. Our inquiries extended only to that part of the government which lies south of the Caucasus, and is called by the Russians the *Trans-Caucasian Provinces*. These provinces are, *Imireti*, embracing, I believe, the supervision of Gooriel and Mingreli, and thus including the whole of ancient Colchis; *Georgia*, subdivided into its three provinces of Kartalini, Kakheti, and Somkheti, and embracing also all the other cantons that lie west of Sheky, Kara-bagh, and Eriván; the *Mussulman Provinces*, which are Sheky, Shirwán, and Kara-bagh; *Daghistán*, including Derbénd, Kooba, and Bakoo; and *Armenia*, embracing Eriván and Nakhcheván.\* At the head of each of these five provinces there is a governor, responsible to the commander-in-chief, and having the requisite sub-governors of districts and commandants of towns under him.

The government of the trans-Caucasian provinces partakes largely of a military nature. Many civilians and natives are indeed employed, but their offices are either in themselves of no responsibility, or are made so by the close supervision of some higher authority; while all stations of power and trust are occupied by military officers, with a field-marshal at their head, whose orders are backed by an army, which amounted when we were there to about 60,000 men. A government supported by so many bayonets can afford to allow its subjects some ensigns of liberty; and accordingly, with the exception of one or two districts, which, notwithstanding the fearful odds against them, have dared to revolt, the whole population is allowed to wear arms, and you

\* Talish was not mentioned in the list that was given us, and I am not sure where it should be classed. Probably it is one of the Mussulman Provinces.



hardly meet a man without the horrid kama at his side. That liberty itself, however, at least of speech, has been banished, may be naturally suspected from the fact, that, with one or two rare exceptions, every person, when circumstances called for an expression of opinion, was careful to say nothing anti-Russian, unless the unparalleled phenomenon may be supposed to exist, of a conquered people's being unanimously attached to their conquerors. Still, however military and absolute Russian despotism may be, it certainly, in disclaiming all religious tests, sets an example to some other governments whose boast is liberty. The question of their religious creed seems never to be asked candidates for office, civil or military; and the commander-in-chief of these provinces is about as likely to be of the papal or protestant, as of the Greek faith. In fact, it was reported that General Strekaloff was soon to be succeeded by a gentleman who was a protestant.

In our observations of the rulers of Georgia, a chief regard was had to the influence which, during thirty years, they have exerted upon the *intelligence* and *morals* of their subjects. That they have as yet done nothing in favour of *education* beyond the precincts of Tiflis, was affirmed by all. Their apologists said that they were desirous of doing so, and had been prevented only by want of time. But if the matter had lain very near their hearts, they could certainly have found a few moments for it, before a whole generation had gone off the stage. In Tiflis, a school of one or two hundred scholars has existed some time, for Georgians and Russians, at least under the patronage, and perhaps partly supported by, government. This, when we were there, they were about to re-organize into a gymnasium, and enlarge into the head of a system with branches in all the provincial towns. It was supposed that in Tiflis as many as 140, and in other places 60 would be admitted; all to be taught, and in the city one-half to be supported, gratis. Russians, Georgians, Armenians, and moslems would be admitted; and instruction would be given in their respective languages (considering Persian as the language of the latter), together with geography, civil and ecclesiastical history, and some other branches. But, after all, the whole was to be merely a military institution, open only to the sons of noblemen and persons of distinction, and introductory to military academies, in such a sense, that whoever had completed his studies in it would be admissible to the rank of cadet. We did not learn that



government had any intentions to provide for the education of the common people.

If in the term *morals* we include the grosser criminal offences against the peace of society, such as murder and robbery, no one can deny that in this respect they have been much improved by Russian authority. For almost perfect security has been introduced into every corner, unless it be too near the mountains, from the Caspian to the Black sea. If we include in it manners and customs, the question of their improvement in this respect will turn upon the decision of another, whether Persian or Russian manners be the most eligible standard for imitation, a decision, after all, hardly worth our time to settle, so little interchange of society do the Russians have with the natives, and so little do they care to make them imitate their own standard. But if by morals we refer to the social vices, infamous as the Georgians have always been known to be for unchastity, it must be confessed that they have deteriorated. The devotees of lust have multiplied. So great was the incontinence of the soldiery, that even Georgians, in the province of Kakheti, were goaded by it, in 1812, to an open and desperate rebellion.

The number of Russians in Tiflis it is both difficult and of very little consequence to ascertain; for nearly all are connected with the army, and constantly fluctuating. The native population consisted, in 1825, of 2500 Armenian, 1500 Georgian, and 500 moslem families. It has increased rapidly since, and the Armenian bishop told us that the present number of Armenian families was 4000. This estimate is probably too high; and the whole number of natives when we were there was undoubtedly somewhat less than 30,000 souls.

The large proportion of Armenians in this population allows us to suppose ourselves virtually, though not really, still in Armenia, and authorizes me to consider our observations upon them as an integral part of the general view I am endeavouring to give of their nation in their own country. With the exception of one Georgian, two or three Greeks, and a Swiss firm that commenced business while we were there, every merchant in Tiflis is Armenian, and nearly the same is true of the mechanics. In this fact is exhibited the natural disposition of the nation.—Some have given to Shah Abbas all the credit of originating Armenian commerce. And that the facilities for trade granted by him to the



colony he so cruelly tore from their homes and settled in the suburb of Joolfah at Isfahán, gave it the first impulse, there can be no doubt. But that impulse was successful then, and has continued to be felt extensively to the present day, only because the genius of the nation is commercial. Once detach an Armenian from his native soil, and the magnetic needle points towards the pole with hardly more regularity than his taste toward merchandize. The thousands whom war has forcibly carried into captivity, may have pursued long the labours of servitude; and the still other thousands which migrate every year voluntarily from their native mountains to the large cities of Turkey (some crowds of whom met us on their way to Constantinople), may practise for years the humble occupations of porters and water-carriers: but almost invariably do they, either in their own persons or in that of their children, work their way into some of the ranks of trade; beginning with the initiatory grade of mechanic, ascending gradually to that of merchant, and finally, the more able or fortunate, reaching that of banker, the acme of their ambition. Fond of attending to the purchase and sale of their goods in person, however distant the one may be made from the other, they become great travellers, and almost every important fair or mart, from Leipsic and London to Bombay and Calcutta, is visited by them. From this view of their character, some have asserted that they resemble the Jews. The comparison seems invidious, and still I cannot but feel that in some respects it is just. For if there is one trait more prominent than any other, and common to the whole nation from Constantinople to Tebriz, it is love of money. They urge a plausible excuse for it, if so much may be said of an excuse for "the root of all evil," from the people and governments where they live; the one being so ignorant and poor, that nothing but money will procure respect, and the other so corrupt, that the same means only will secure justice or protection. Such a view of their situation is doubtless just; for in a state of society like that of Turkey and Persia, wealth and brutal force are almost the only means of acquiring influence. In this alternative, their national taste would not allow them to hesitate. We have not learned that an Armenian rebel or robber exists.

An Armenian merchant differs materially from a Greek. As in his national character there is more sense and less wit, so in his trade there is more respectability and less trickery. Not that he is



an honest man, for cheating, at least in the part of the nation of which I am now speaking, is universal, and is regarded only as an authorized art of trade. Conscience, it is true, allows it to be sinful; but they say, "Are we in a convent, that we should be able to live without it?" Indeed, such is the state of things, that for a perfectly upright and honest man to gain a livelihood, is generally and thoroughly believed to be impossible. But a distinction must be made between cheating and bad faith. A Turk will cheat all that he can in making a bargain, and yet he is proverbial for good faith in keeping it when made. I recollect an instance where one, who had perhaps told half a dozen lies to obtain the highest price for an article we bought, called on us a day or two after to receive from him a *pará* that had been overlooked in the reckoning. The Armenians are certainly less remarkable for good faith; and yet, notwithstanding all their cheating, they are not destitute of it. Their disposition to monopolize is uncommonly overbearing. A rich merchant will, if possible, crush every one whose trade interferes with his. Indeed, I think I am authorized to make the remark general, that it is in the character of the nation to be peculiarly intolerant of competition, and overbearing toward a conquered rival. And the history of their civil broils, when they had a political existence, as well as the villainies to which their ecclesiastical rivalries now frequently lead, incline me to the opinion of a very acute observer of character, that when the bad passions of an Armenian are fully awake, no deed is too base or too dark for him to do. The merchants of Tiflis are said also to be very clanish in their trade; ready, by every means, to injure a foreigner who may attempt to establish himself among them. An instance was mentioned to us of a European's being ruined and forced to leave the place, by their combining to undersell him in the articles with which he commenced business.

The trade of the trans-Caucasian provinces has been fostered by the Russian government. By a Ukase dated the 20th of October, 1821, the emperor Alexander granted special privileges to native and foreign merchants, and reduced the duties upon all merchandize to five per cent. for ten years from the first of July 1822. This franchise of trade was granted, we were told, in consequence of the representations of the Chevalier le Gamba, consul of France, the only European consul whom we found at Tiflis. He had travelled extensively in these regions, and we are indebted to him for many



civilities, and for much information.\* He considered Tiflis to be favourably situated for trade, and expected, that, enjoying a protecting government, and lying at nearly equal distances from the Black and Caspian Seas, it will again become, as in the days of Justinian, the thoroughfare of the over-land commerce of Asia. By the one sea the merchandize of Europe is easily brought to the neighbouring port of Redoot-kulaah; and the other shortens the distance of the drug-growing steppes of Tartary, and even of the rich valley of the Indus; while superior security tends to attract hither the trade of Tebriz, from its old channel by Erzroom. Communication with Europe, through either Odessa, Moscow, or St. Petersburg, is easy by means of the Russian post, which leaves weekly, and reaches the capital, a distance of 2627 versts (1751 miles), in about fifteen days. The consul confessed that, though the trade of Tiflis had considerably increased, his sanguine expectations had not yet been realized. The Persian and Turkish wars, by interrupting trade, and the military genius of the government, leading it to bestow all its attention upon the profession of arms and lightly esteem that of commerce, had contributed to his disappointment. He hoped, however, to obtain a prolongation of the franchise.

You may suppose that we were gratified to meet the productions of our own country in this commercial market. But not every countryman's face is welcome, even at the distance of Asiatic Georgia. In the first caravanserai we entered, the day after reaching Tiflis, we stumbled upon a hogshead of New England rum! What a harbinger, thought we, have our countrymen sent before their missionaries! What a reproof to the Christians of America, that, in finding fields of labour for their missionaries, they should allow themselves to be anticipated by her merchants, in finding a market for their poisons! When shall the love of souls cease to be a less powerful motive of enterprise than the love of gain? I had before wondered where, in Mohammedan countries, a market could be found for the large quantities of rum that have been sent to the Archipelago, especially since temperance has checked the consumption of it at home; but have since been assured that about a third of what reaches Constantinople is bought by Georgian merchants.

\* Besides answering our questions verbally, he lent us his Travels in Southern Russia and the Trans-Caucasian Provinces, which he had published. Having been unable since to procure this work from Paris, I cannot refer to it as an authority for the facts which we borrowed from it, the few notes we took not enabling me to mention the pages.



That the people of Georgia are among the hardest drinkers in the world, is well known. Their country, especially the province of Kakheti (the others produce principally grain), is extremely fertile in the vine. It grows to an enormous size, running upon trees like the wild grape, and requiring little more cultivation. The wine which it produces is not bad, and is so abundant, that the best is but about four cents the bottle, while the common is less than a cent. The ordinary day's ration for an inhabitant of Tiflis, from the mechanic to the prince, is said to be a *tonk*, measuring between five and six bottles of Bordeaux! and the quantity drunk at their revels is perfectly incredible. Neither bottles, nor any kind of casks, however, are used; and skins of goats and cattle, with the hair inward and smeared with naphtha, supply their place. ✓

We had hoped to find in operation at Tiflis, an extensive and efficient system of education for the Armenians, under the direction of archbishop Nérsés, the ornament and boast of the Armenian church. But our first inquiries shewed us that we were to be disappointed. Nérsés was no longer here. So long ago as when the Rev. Henry Martyn was at Echmiádzin, he had, as president of the synod and wekeel of the Catholicos, the complete control of affairs at that establishment. Subsequently he resided at Tiflis as bishop of the province of Georgia, but still retained his former office, and was universally regarded as destined to succeed the present Catholicos, in his office as head of the Armenian church. His name was known wherever the nation is scattered, and though many an ambitious ecclesiastic envied his elevation and disliked his authority, the more intelligent of the laity regarded him with great respect, as the most enlightened, sensible, and patriotic of their clergy. His measures showed a mind bent upon improving the civil and intellectual condition of his nation; nor did he fail to make some innovations of a religious nature. That he might diminish the number of priests, preparatory to new regulations respecting them, he determined to ordain none in his diocese for a certain number of years; he openly discouraged pilgrimages; and forbade the book of legends to be read any longer in the churches under his jurisdiction. His efforts in favour of education will appear, when I speak of his academy. As might be expected of a man not evangelically enlightened, they looked no farther than to the cultivation of the intellect, as a path to worldly advantages. Of his political views we obtained no information, nor did we learn the precise



cause of his removal from Tiflis. We were told in general terms, that he incurred the displeasure of Marshal Paskevich, and was at once transferred, or rather banished, to Bessarabia. Perhaps his enlightened and independent mind was leading him to views respecting his nation that crossed the plans of government, and, combined with his great influence, made him regarded as a dangerous subject in so distant a portion of the empire: or, more probably, was likely to prove a formidable obstacle to the plans of government respecting the Armenian church, whatever they may be. Though thus arbitrarily disposed of, and consequently cut off from the hope of succeeding to the chair of the Catholicos, he was not entirely deprived of office, but still is bishop of a see that embraces all the Armenians in the western part of Russia, from the Black Sea to St. Petersburg. So many of the Armenian colony at Caminiee in Poland, as have not embraced the faith of Rome, are probably under his jurisdiction, and perhaps that is the origin of his see.\*

Nérses left behind him an interesting monument of his desire to enlighten his countrymen, in the academy that was built by him here. A sight of it in its best days would doubtless have gratified us much; but it has declined since his departure, and, during our visit, was closed entirely, in consequence of the vacation which occurs during dog-days. Merely the building, however, is a strong testimony to his patriotism. It is a brick structure, two stories high, whitewashed without, and ornamented on both sides with a row of columns; and was built at an expense of sixty or seventy thousand roubles, all of which, with the exception of a few legacies, was drawn from Nérses's own resources. The Russians helped in no other way, than that the general security introduced by their government, encouraged individual benevolence thus to exert itself for the public good. In this solitary instance only has it produced such an effect upon education, and as if even for this they would have some compensation, they were actually occupying a great

\* This colony was originally formed by Armenians, who fled from the devastators of their country, but at what time I have not learned. The site of their city is exceedingly strong, and even down nearly to our own times, they have enjoyed a semi-independence, having their own officers, who were clothed with the power of life and death. In 1624, the Catholicos Melkiseti, being forced in the persecutions of Shah Abbas to flee from Echmiádzin, took up his residence at Leopold, another Armenian colony in Poland of a similar origin, and then consisting of 1000 families. After a year he removed to Caminiee, where he died. In 1666, the archbishop, or, as he is also called, the patriarch of Caminiee, was converted to the Romish faith by a Theatin monk, and the books of his church were purged of their heresies. Mukhitár's Dict. Arts. Gamenits and Ilov. Chamcheán, p. 7, c. 10. Tournefort, vol. 2, p. 403.



part of the building, when we visited it, as an arsenal for the army. The rooms of the part to which we had access, differed in no respect from our own academies, being furnished with benches and desks in European style. To erect the building, when the money was provided, was easy; but to procure competent instructors was a more difficult task. One was brought from Paris, a second from Moscow, and a third from Isfahán. The number finally amounted to ten or eleven, of which three taught Armenian, two Russian, one Persian, one French, one mathematics, and one drawing.

Nérses originally designed that it should rank high as a gymnasium; but after he ceased to direct, it became merely a grammar school for teaching Armenian, Russian, and French, and is now fast dwindling into a common school. None of the modern improvements in education were ever tried in it, except an ineffectual attempt at the Lancasterian system. Though in the study of languages the New Testament is used as a class-book, it is not and never was adapted to exert any moral or religious influence upon the nation; and probably that work was selected merely in consequence of the facility with which it could be procured. A vartabéd, named Harütün, however, who, under Nérses, and since, has been its director, is a useful man; and in his devotedness to the enlightening of his nation, seems to look a little farther than the improvement of the intellect. He has published archbishop Plato's catechism in Armenian. The present number of scholars was about 200; and as there are no funds, we were assured that the current expenses, amounting to 3000 roubles per annum, are borne by this episcopal see.

Whether this establishment was connected in the intentions of Nérses with an extensive system of schools, we are not informed. He never, in fact, built any other, nor is there another Armenian school within the limits of the modern province of Georgia, as already defined, with the exception of one containing about thirty scholars in Gánjeh. Compared with the Georgians, the Armenians of Tiflís are said to be intelligent, but in reality they can have but little education. Their females have not, and never had the advantages of a school: still some of them are privately taught to read. And, strange as it may seem, the language they are taught is not their own, but Georgian; a fact that shews the influence of the Georgians here to be greater than from their small number might be supposed, and accounts for what we were assured is true,



that the Armenians of Tiflis know Georgian better than their own tongue.

Nérses found, in commencing his school, quite as great a deficiency of books as of teachers, and that without a press, which would enable him to supply it, the establishment would be incomplete, and its operations embarrassed. Having heard at Constantinople that even a newspaper was issued from this press, we had expected to find it in efficient operation; and one of our first demands on visiting the school, was to be directed to it. In search of it we wandered into the precincts of the Armenian cathedral, where it is now located. A bishop, named Simeon Nesmooneán, who then occupied Nérses's place, espying us, politely invited us to his apartments. In his civilities, however, the press was forgotten, although we reminded him repeatedly of our desire to see it. We learned that, though still in operation, it does very little for want of funds. Only a spelling-book, the catechism already mentioned, an edition of the Venice Armenian grammar, and another of the Psalter, have been printed. No newspaper has been attempted, and the report probably referred to the government gazette, a paper of little value, in Russian and Georgian, that is issued once in about twenty days, from a press owned by government. The same press has also attempted to print in Persian, but appears not to have succeeded.

The bishop's politeness extended to an invitation to tea; and we accordingly spent an hour or two with him in the evening. Tea, with which, according to a custom not uncommon here, brandy was offered us in the place of milk, was served up around a *jet d'eau* in his garden, in the midst of vines and rare vegetables, and a variety of flowering and fruit trees. His vines, he assured us, needed no covering in the winter, so mild is the climate. It was the hour of evening prayer in the church, but he seemed to feel under no obligation to attend, and we were interrupted only by his being called to say a prayer upon the occasion of a sacrifice. It took but a moment, and was said on the spot, without any solemnity or ceremony. He manifested a perfect readiness to answer our questions respecting his diocese, and seemed indeed better acquainted with it than with his Bible; for he committed the mistake, unpardonable in a bishop, of attributing the destruction of Jerusalem to Cyrus, instead of Nebuchadnezzar.

From him and from other sources we obtained the following information. The only Armenian convent in the city, is the one that



with an article in our Instructions. It originated in the benevolence of a native of Isfahán, of the Armenian family of Eleazar, now one of the richest in the Russian empire; and was opened in 1816. The legacy left by its founder not only sufficed for erecting the buildings and putting it in operation, but a permanent fund of 200,000 roubles remained\*; and thirty-two of its students are now fed, clothed, and instructed gratis. The whole number of Armenian students is about 60, and the number of graduates up to 1829 was 69. It is not, however, an exclusively Armenian institution, and the Russian branch is much the largest. Most of its Armenian students are from places north of the Caucasus, though a few go from these provinces. They are taught the Russian, French, German, and Armenian languages, history, different branches of the mathematics, philosophy, &c. But their attention to all is somewhat superficial. There is no department appropriated to any particular profession, but a general foundation is laid for all; hardly the right kind, however, Serope himself confessed, for theology, and none of its graduates have yet entered the sacred profession. So that even here we look in vain for, what is indeed no where to be found, an institution for the education of the Armenian clergy. The present rector is a vartabéd, named Michael Salamtéán, who was born at Constantinople, and educated a papist in the papal Armenian convent of Bzummar, in Mount Lebanon, but has since renounced allegiance to the pope. He is much devoted to enlightening his nation, and is enlightened himself. But there is reason to fear that he is secretly inclining to the principles of German neology. His religious influence, of course, cannot be good; and the consequence is, that the graduates are generally irreligious. They learn Russian levity and love of honour, and come out no longer Armenians, but prejudiced against them as semi-barbarian Asiatics. Instead of going to their country with the patriotic intention of reforming their nation, in the prevalent spirit of Russia they seek only for promotion, and disperse through different parts of the empire in the employment of government. Only a few have found their way south of the Caucasus. The only encouraging hope, is, that the institution may in time give the nation some valuable authors. Connected with it, there is an Armenian press, which was formerly at St. Petersburg. The rector has kindly caused two

\* I have taken this sum from Avdall. See his account of this institution in the supplement to his translation of Chamcheán's History of Armenia, vol. 2, p. 527.



or three religious tracts to be printed at it for the missionaries at Shoosha. There is also another Armenian press at Moscow, which is the private property of a Frenchman. But neither of them accomplishes much.

The first sabbath we were in Tiflis we attended divine service in the Armenian cathedral, and the second in the church of a German colony in the vicinity of the city. When stating, in a preceding letter, of what the church services of the Armenians consist, I reserved for this place a description of their forms of worship as they appear to an observer. But so much do they differ from any thing known among us, that I have little hope of giving one that shall be intelligible. The *church* itself, when built in the style common to the oldest and best in Armenia, of which the cathedral at Tiflis is a pretty good specimen, has the form of a cross; sometimes externally, by means of short wings attached to each side, and generally internally, by means of a lateral arch crossing the main longitudinal one at right angles. The nave, or centre of the cross, is surmounted by a species of dome quite peculiar to these regions, but here common to old churches and sepulchral monuments, and evidently very ancient. It consists of an upright cylindrical base capped with an acute cone. The altar, for which we have no substitute but the communion table, occupies the eastern extremity of the main longitudinal arch of the building, the Armenians holding that divine worship should be directed only toward the east. From the back part of it rise up several steps or shelves, occupied by candlesticks, crosses, small pictures, and other ornaments. It stands upon a platform three or four feet high, which projects far enough in front to allow the priests and deacons to stand upon it to say mass, the only time when it or the altar is used. A section of the body of the church next in front of the altar, extending from side to side of the building, is appropriated to the priests and their assistants, and is often raised a step above the rest of the floor, and separated from it by a railing. Here the common daily prayers are said. The male part of the congregation occupy without order the remainder of the floor, which is entirely without seats. The females are crowded into an orchestra at the western end (the only gallery there is), and are there screened by lattice-work from the gaze of the men. In some cases, also, a similar space is appropriated to them under the orchestra, and only enclosed by a simple railing. A pulpit, that



prominent and essential part of our places of worship, we did not find in Armenia! A church thus fitted up, however awkward it might be to us, corresponds precisely with the ideas entertained by the Armenians of public worship. Mass is the principal thing, and the altar is raised so that every one can easily witness its celebration. Prayers are less important, and no provision is made for the readers of them to be distinctly seen or heard. Preaching is hardly thought of, and the pulpit is excluded.

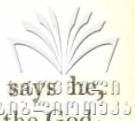
Go into one of these churches in time of prayers (*mass* will be considered elsewhere), and you will find a number of lamps suspended from the roof, endeavouring to shed their dim light upon the congregation, though the sun be shining with noon-day brightness. In the enclosure before the altar will be two or three priests surrounded by a crowd of boys from eight to twelve years old, *performing* prayers; some swinging a smoking censor, others, taper in hand, reading first from one book and then from another, and all changing places and positions according to rule. The monotonous inarticulate singsong of the youthful officiators, with voices often discordant and stretched to their highest pitch, will grate upon your ear, and start the inquiry, Can such prayers enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth? You will be surrounded by a barefooted congregation, standing, wherever each can find a place, upon a sheepskin, or bit of rug (unless the church is rich enough to have a carpet), uttering responses without order, and frequently prostrating themselves and kissing the ground, with a sign of the cross at every fall and rise. The whole will seem to you a mummery and an abomination, and you will probably hasten away, wishing to hear and see no more of it.

In entering the church barefoot, and in prostrating themselves to the ground, the Armenians have doubtless retained relics of genuine orientalism. Abraham, when he ran to meet the angels, bowed himself to the earth; and Moses, when standing on holy ground, took his shoes from off his feet. Why so large a part of the service has been suffered to pass into the hands of boys is exceedingly strange. They fill the four ecclesiastical grades below the subdeacon, to which are attached the duties of clerks, or more commonly are substitutes for their occupants, having themselves no rank at all in the church. Of the first 158 pages of the *Jamakírck*, containing the whole of the midnight service with all its variations for feasts and other special occasions, more than 130, consisting of



psalms, hymns, &c. are read or chanted by them under the direction of the priests. Well may the priests, in view of having such important helps in their duties, find motive enough in most places to teach a few children to read! Of the remaining pages, some half a dozen belong to the deacons, if there are any, and the remainder, consisting simply of prayers and lessons from the gospels, are read by the priests. All the service, with few other exceptions than the lessons, and that the priest in the middle of every prayer of any length turns round to wave a cross before the people, and say, "Peace be to all, let us worship God," is performed with the back to the congregation. Add to this, that the whole, with the unfortunate exception of legends, is in a language not understood, often by the priests themselves, and much less by the congregation; and if it were not, is read or chanted with so little articulation as would render it perfectly unintelligible; and you will hardly need any other answer to the question, whether there is any spirituality in the worship of the Armenian church. The priests go through it, as if it were a daily task of the lips, as a joiner's work is of his hands, and are apparently as much relieved when it is over. If a boy makes a mistake, he is reprov'd, or even chastis'd, on the spot, though a prayer be interrupted for the purpose. The people, too, are constantly coming and going, or moving about, and often engaged in conversation. To say that a real reverence for sacred things is unknown among the clergy, and that neither they nor the people have any idea of spiritual worship, seems too broad an assertion; and still, in making it, we are supported, not only by our own observation, but by that of others to whose testimony we attribute great weight.

I ought not to leave this subject without a word upon image-worship. Going to Armenia, as I did, almost immediately after a visit to Greece, I could not but feel at first, that this error is not very prominent in the Armenian church. Some churches have been already mentioned that had but few pictures. As we advanced into Armenia, however, we found them multiplying, and image-worship does exist to a considerable extent. Indeed the adoration of the cross, already explained, is a most striking instance of it. Before pictures, also, tapers are burned, votive offerings are suspended, and prayers are offered, especially on the festivals of the saints they represent. The same author who so exalts the cross,



gives to the image of Christ as high a rank. "We," says he, "and our sect hold and preach that, as in looking toward the God-bearing cross, we offer worship not to the visible matter, but to the invisible God, who is in it; so we worship the image of the Saviour, not the matter and the colours, but Christ by means of it, who is the image of the invisible God the Father. And as a name and an image are equally symbols of a thing, only that one is addressed to the ear, and the other to the eye, it is as much the meaning of the apostle that every knee in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth should bow to the image as to the name of Jesus.\* But as neither a name nor an image without the substance is to be worshipped, and the saints are not every where present to dwell in their images as Christ in his, their images are not to be worshipped. But we honour and reverence the images of the saints, holding them as mediators and intercessors with God, and offering the worship of God by their hands. For the images of the Creator only, and not that of the creature, is to be worshipped."† In a word, though the Armenians are less devoted to image-worship than the Greeks, they are more so than the papists. Not, however, that they have carved images like the latter, for, like the former, they have only pictures, and I here use the word image in the latter sense.

Let us turn from these heartless forms of solemn mockery to a different scene—simple and devout protestant worship in the heart of Georgia! Of the seven German colonies in these provinces, whose history and present condition will be related hereafter, one, named New Tiflis, is about two versts from the city. It consists of two rows of neatly white-washed houses of one story, at moderate distances from each other, along a broad and straight street, and contains not far from 200 inhabitants, who have the regular instructions of a minister of the gospel. We had already become acquainted with pastor Saltet, and found him an intelligent and extremely devout man. We felt at our first interview that he was ripe for heaven, but knew not that he would so soon be there. Within a month, he was brought by the cholera, in less than twenty-four hours, from perfect health to the grave. He was the general spiritual inspector of all the colonies, and informed us

\* How can those who understand the apostle literally avoid Nérses's argument?

† Nérses Shnorháli, *Unthanragán*, p. 132, 133.



that some at least of his charge were excellent Christians. As we entered his church, the worshippers were dropping in one by one, and quietly taking their seats, while the devotion in their countenances shewed that they felt the solemnity of the duties in which they were about to engage, and the books in their hands testified that they had been instructed to understand as well as to perform them. The prayers of the pastor seemed to breathe the united and heartfelt devotion of all; his sermon was a direct, affectionate, and earnest address to every hearer, and the singing, which affected me more than all, was in good German taste, simple, solemn, and touching. I shall not attempt to describe the feelings awakened by this scene, refreshing as an oasis in a boundless desert, though, in spite of me at the time, they expressed themselves in tears. Since first setting foot in Asia, I had deeply felt that a consistent Christian life, and a devout simple worship, exhibited by a few truly governed by the fear of God, and shining like a candle into all the surrounding darkness, was the great desideratum needed by a missionary to give intelligibleness to his instructions, and force to his arguments. How often, without it, had I seemed to myself like an inhabitant of some other planet, vainly endeavouring to model my hearers after characters whom I had seen there, and of whom they could form no conception, or whose existence they could hardly believe! Here, at last, I seemed to have found the desideratum supplied, and was encouraged to hope, that this example of pure religion would be like leaven to all the corrupt and backsliding churches around.

We took some pains to notice how the Sabbath was observed by the inhabitants of Tiflis. The bazárs and shops were all closed, except those of the vendors of provisions, including (if such a classification may be allowed) the retailers of wine and ardent spirits. The number of attendants at public worship in the morning seemed but small, for the two or three churches which we entered contained but few worshippers. In the afternoon the whole male population of the city seemed to be poured out into the streets and esplanades to indulge in relaxation; every one conversing of his merchandize or his pleasures, and all exhibiting a scene of gaiety and amusement. While the ladies, with all the famed charms of Georgian beauty, which, I may be allowed to say, has not been overrated (for I have never seen a city, so large a proportion of whose females were beautiful in form, features, and



complexion, as Tiflis), were assembled in little groups upon the low terraces of their houses, dancing to the sound of tambourin and clapping of hands, to contribute their aid to render this solemn day the least solemn of all the seven.

## LETTER VIII.

### TIFLIS.

Origin of the Georgians—Geographical divisions of their country—Historical traditions before Alexander, and origin of the Orpeliens—Subjection to the Romans and Parthians—Conversion to Christianity—Pakradian kings of Georgia—Invasion of the Seljookians—Subsequent growth of Georgian power—Moghul invasion—Subjected by the Sofies of Persia—Submission to Russia—Present number of Georgians—Their civil state—Education—Religion—Complete subjection of the valley of the Koor to the Russians—View of Colchis—Jews in Colchis and Georgia—Present state of Colchis—Independence of the inhabitants of the Caucasus—Their religious state—Missions among them—Papal missions in Georgia and Colchis—Papal Armenian convent at Venice.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE thus far intentionally neglected to speak of the Georgians, in order to make in one place a connected report of what we learned respecting that nation. Permit me now to introduce them to your notice by a few remarks upon their history.

The Greeks knew the Georgians under the name of *Iberes*; and their geographers divided between them the *Colchi*, and *Albani*, the whole of the tract that lies between Armenia and mount Caucasus, extending from the Caspian to the Black Sea; in other words, the valleys of the Cyrus and the Phasis. The name *Virk*, given to them by the Armenian writers, seems to be of the same origin with that used by the Greeks. By the Turks and Persians they are universally called *Gürjy*, and their country *Gürjistán*;\* and probably our own name for them is derived from this origin, rather than from the Greek *georgos*, as some have supposed. The Georgians call themselves *Kartli*, which name they derive from *Kartlos*, the second son of *Togarmah*, as the Armenians do theirs from *Haig*, his first son. Such a tradition seems at once to be

\* Perhaps from the river *Kür*, or *Koor*.



A. D. 1733, they issued a quarto edition of the Bible, which would compare with the best editions of any country at that time. One of the editions of the Armenian New Testament circulated by the British and Foreign Bible Society was printed by them. And they have also published a Bible with various readings.

As to the influence their society is at present exerting upon the nation, the result of our inquiries, is, that in Armenia itself it is small. The heavy denunciations against their publications just mentioned, are indeed forgotten. Not only is no effort made to impede their circulation, but they are held in high esteem wherever the Armenians are scattered, even in India, are received by all classes apparently without suspicion, and are found in the hands of the highest clergy. But in Armenia they are extremely rare and difficult to be obtained. We could not learn that the society has an agent in all that region, any farther than that a papal Armenian deacon at Tiflis had offered to procure from Venice any books that might be ordered. With the Capuchin missions, of which I have spoken, we did not learn that the Venice Society has any connection.

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## LETTER IX.

### FROM TIFLIS TO SHOOSHA.

Mode of travelling—Re-enter Armenia at the Red Bridge—Province of Kasakhi—Sleep in a meadow—Deserted plains—Reach Anenfeld—German colonies in the trans-Caucasian provinces—Shankór—Sickness—Gánjeh—Detained at the Koorek-chai—River Terter—Berdaah—The Oodi—Nestorian emigrants—Extreme debility—Sleep upon a scaffold—Reach Shoosha—The Cholera—Protracted illness—Kindness of the German missionaries.

DEAR SIR,

WE left Tiflis on the 5th of August for Shoosha, where we hoped to find a cool and healthy retreat, until the season was sufficiently advanced to allow us to proceed to Tebriz, without exposure to heat or disease. As the valley of the Koor, through which we were to travel, is so entirely depopulated that we should not pass an inhabited spot for three days, we laid in provisions for that length of



time. Our conveyance was a large covered baggage-waggon, without seats or springs, and drawn by four horses abreast, after the Russian fashion. We had hired it of a German colonist to carry us to Helenendorf (which was considered half the distance) in preference to taking caravan or post horses, on account of the defence it afforded us from the great heat of the sun.

We started at 2 P.M., and retracing the road by which we came from Kars, for about ten versts, to the point where it leaves the bank of the Koor, continued thence directly across a parched and uncultivated plain to a low range of hills, which we reached about sunset. In ascending them our waggon stuck fast in the mud, and was extricated only by our lifting a long time at the wheels, and finally unloading all our baggage. To avoid a repetition of the accident, we then walked a great distance, fatigued as we were, and thus reaching a level spot at half past 9 P.M. near a deserted moslem village, stopped for the night. No water could be found except in an extremely muddy ditch, nor any place preferable to the middle of the road to lie upon. We had no tent, and our cloaks were our only beds and covering.

*Aug. 6.* We were on our way at 2 or 3 A.M. In crossing a river about sunrise, the waggon again stuck fast. It was extricated by the same process as the last night; and reaching the Red Bridge at 7 o'clock, we stopped to breakfast, and to bait our horses. Antonio, the Armenian who had accompanied us from Constantinople, and who was our only attendant, had now a burning fever, brought on by fatigue and exposure; and we had no alternative but to prepare our own coffee, the reviving influence of which our feelings loudly called for. The bridge just named is an old and solid structure built over the river Khram. One of its abutments is formed into a large caravanserai.\* A road here leads to the right over the mountains to Eriván.

We now re-entered Armenia. Its boundary is marked not only by the river, but by a spur of the mountains on the right, which follows it down toward the Koor. Hitherto almost no signs of inhabitants had been observed; but now we passed two deserted underground villages, which may be the winter residence of some nomads, and in the course of the day occasional stacks of grain

\* Chardin speaks of a bridge with a large caravanserai adjoining it at this place, both of which were the handsomest he had seen in Georgia. But his description hardly suits this structure, and I am inclined to think the ruins a little below are all that is left of them. The neighbouring village, of 150 houses, also, is no more. Chardin, vol. 2, p. 141.



indicated a little cultivation. The province we were in is called Kasakhi, and in the time of Chardin belonged to a distinct khan, who was tributary to Persia. Its name is said to be derived from a Mohammedan people, called Khazák, who inhabit it, and whom Chardin, Tournefort, and some modern travellers, suppose to be a branch of the Cossacks. As they came into this region, however, with the Seljookian armies, and speak a dialect of Turkish, St. Martin calls them a Turkish tribe, and suggests that they may be a branch of the powerful nation of Kerghiz, who are also sometimes called by the same name. Unfortunately we found not a human being of whom to inquire, and although we repeatedly mentioned their name in the adjacent provinces, no one seemed to recognise it.

We stopped again during the day for about an hour. The spot was selected for a spring, which here dropped from a bank of clay. Thirst, created by the excessive heat of the sun, soon led us to taste it, but it was so impregnated with nitre, or some other mineral substance, as to be unpalatable. We sought for a shade from the fiery sun, but could find none except that of the waggon in the middle of the road, and of some weeds by its side. Reaching, at 6 P.M. a verdant tract of meadow land, watered by a limpid rivulet, we stopped for the night; and soon lay down to sleep, congratulating ourselves upon the contrast it presented to our last night's accommodations. The grass on which we lay was clean, the water was pure, and the air apparently wholesome.

*Aug. 7.* We started again at half past 2 A.M., and reaching at 7 o'clock a post-house on the farther side of a river, we stopped two hours. Thus far the ground over which we had travelled, with the exception of the hills mentioned on the 5th, and those along the banks of the Khram, had been neither hilly nor perfectly level, but generally arable and of a good soil. We had lost sight of the Koor, on the left, since the tenth verst from Tiflis, and on the right, a hilly and mountainous tract had gradually approached us. But soon after leaving the post-house to-day, an almost perfectly level plain opened before us, extending in breadth from the mountains on one hand, to the Koor on the other, and reaching in length toward the south-east (the direction of the Koor), to so great a distance, as to present a horizon like the sea. It was watered with rivulets and canals, and possessed an excellent soil, but, with the exception of an occasional meadow, or a field of grain reaped and



stacked, it was thinly sprinkled over with shrubs, and perfect desolation reigned throughout. Not a house was to be seen, and the solitude was broken only by a few antelopes occasionally bounding through the shrubs. One needs only to travel through this *fertile desert*, to be convinced of what history tells us respecting the wars and captivities by which it has been produced. Reaching a small tree by a water course, at 1 P.M., we were tempted to stop and shelter ourselves an hour and a half from the sultry sun.

We had heard on the road that a deadly disease was raging at Gánjeh, which carried off in a few hours nearly all whom it attacked. Its name we could not learn, but from the description of it given by our informants, we could not doubt that it was either the plague or the cholera; though one was not known to exist at all in these regions, and the other had not been heard of nearer than Tebriz in Persia, and Bakoo on the Caspian. To exchange waggons at Helenendorf, according to our original intention, was now rendered dangerous and impossible. For we must pass through the infected air of Gánjeh on our way, and then be arrested by a sanitary cordon, which, we understood, had been drawn between the two places. No course was left us, therefore, but to turn aside to the little German colony of Anenfeld, near the ruins of Shamkór; although we had been warned not to stop there on account of its unhealthy situation. For not only could we find a waggon in no other place, but it was the only village we heard of nearer than Gánjeh. On starting again, we could distinctly see the pillar of Shamkór eight or ten miles before us; and we soon turned to the right toward the village. We were interested to find, that one of the most common of the wild shrubs which cover the plain around it, is the pomegranate. Its fruit, which was now in a green state, is said to be good when ripe. We reached the colony about 5 P.M.

Both because to-morrow was the Sabbath, and on account of Antonio's fever, which continued unabated, we were obliged to stop until Monday. Anenfeld was settled about twelve years ago by 150 German families; but the number remaining was only 46, and of these many had lost a father, or a mother, or children, by disease. We saw but little of them, as they were spending the sickly season in a more healthy situation, 25 versts distant in the mountains; and only a few came down by turns to keep guard, three days at a time, that their nomadic neighbours might not take



advantage of their absence to rob them of their goods and their crops. Their houses are of one story, neatly built, and situated upon parallel streets, between which is an open square with a church in its centre. They have no regular pastor, but one of their own number acts as their spiritual head. The village is surrounded by luxuriant gardens of culinary vegetables, fruit trees, and vines, indicating great fertility. Its soil is also dry, and water good; and we were at a loss to account for its sickliness. But on Monday morning, a south-east wind brought over us a dense fog from the marshes and rice plantations along the Koor, and by almost exhibiting, in a palpable form, the disease with which it was charged, left us no longer in doubt. The site of the village is near the mountains, two or three versts south-westerly from the ruins of Shamkór. From it the parched steppes across the Koor could be distinctly seen, and far beyond them appeared the immense chain of the Caucasus, with its snowy ridge rising like an eternal bulwark to the skies.

The causes which led to the establishment of the German colonies in Georgia, and their present state, deserve a moment's attention; in fact, we were directed by our instructions to make them a particular object of inquiry. They owe their origin to extravagant views respecting the millennium. Some years ago, several popular and ardent ministers in the kingdom of Würtemberg maintained, in commentaries on the Apocalypse and in other publications, that that wished-for period would commence in 1836, and would be preceded by a dreadful apostacy and great persecutions. These views, in addition to the fascinating interest always connected with prophetic theories, being enforced with much pious feeling, acquired so great credit, as to be adopted by nearly all the religious people in the kingdom, and by many others. At the same time, the advocates of the neological system being the predominant party in the clergy, succeeded in effecting some alterations in the prayers and hymns of the church, in accommodation to their errors. This grieved exceedingly all who were attached to evangelical principles, and was taken to be the commencement of the apostacy they expected. Their prophetic teachers had intimated, that, as in the destruction of Jerusalem, the Christians found a place of refuge, so would there be one now, and that somewhere in the vicinity of the Caspian Sea. Many, therefore of the common people determined to seek the wished-for asylum, that they and their children (for



whom the better sort were particularly anxious) might escape the impending storm, and also be able to form an independent ecclesiastical establishment according to their own notions. To these were joined others desirous of change or in straightened circumstances, who, though not at heart pious, professed for the time to be influenced by the same principles and motives. In fact the latter finally became the most numerous. The company, when it left Würtemberg, consisted of 1500 families. But no adequate arrangement having been made for the journey, and the sinister motives of the majority contributing to create disorder, they suffered exceedingly on the way, and before they reached Odessa two-thirds had died. There they found a large number of their countrymen, and received a reinforcement of 100 families.

They reached Georgia in 1817, and settled in seven colonies. One, divided into two villages, called Marienfeld and Petersdorf, is on the Iori in Kakheti; two others, New Tiflis and Alexandersdorf, are on the left bank of the Koor near Tiflis; two more, Elizabeththal and Katherinenfeld, are in Somkhети, not far from the same city; and Anenfeld and Helenendorf are here in the vicinity of Gánjeh. The emperor, in the same spirit of encouragement toward foreign settlers, which has actuated many of his predecessors almost from the foundation of the Russian monarchy, and which has recently stripped the adjacent Persian and Turkish provinces of their Armenian population, granted them a ready reception and considerable privileges. They were allowed to have their own municipal officers and internal police, free from the interference of the Russians, and were never to be draughted for soldiers. They received a quantity of land, free from taxes for a certain number of years, and the loan of a sum of money from government, to aid in building their houses and commencing agricultural operations.\* Those who should refund this loan after a certain number of years, were to remain free foreigners, with the liberty of going and coming when and where they might choose; those who should not, were to become subjects of the crown. At first they did not flourish; some were sickly, and others had internal dissensions. The two near

\* Our principal informants respecting these colonies were the German missionaries, and they did not give exact numbers. Le Gamba says of Marienfeld and Petersdorf, that each family was allowed 35 disseatines (about 90 acres) of land, to be free from taxes for ten years, and then to pay 20 kopecks (about 15 cts.) the disseatine; and that their houses cost the crown only 125 silver roubles (about 94 dollars), which was to be repaid in ten years without interest.





Gánjeh were driven away by the Persians in the last war, and lost almost every thing. Individuals were even carried into captivity; and when we were at Tebriz, a poor colonist came there in search of his wife and child, who, he had heard, were in the harem of a Persian noble in that vicinity. He recovered his little boy, but his wife was dead. At the same time, another scourge visited them, as dreadful as it was unusual. A number of hyenas from the neighbouring mountains, where they abound, descended upon the colony of Helenendorf. They traversed the streets for several days, attacking all who were exposed to them, and even flying furiously at the windows, where they heard the cry of a child, or caught the glimpse of an individual within. Many graves, also, were robbed by them of the bodies of the dead. Several persons were wounded, but only one, a young man, was slain. The colonists are now prospering more in their worldly interests, but it is doubtful whether many of them will not fail to fulfil the condition upon which their liberty depends. The whole number is at present about 2000 souls.

The arrival of the German missionaries in Georgia, in the spring of 1823, was the commencement of some ecclesiastical order among them. They were found entirely without pastors, and deplorably destitute of religious privileges; and those gentlemen, induced by their earnest request, as well as by their condition, devoted to them the whole of their first summer. Then, finding that too much of their attention was thus called away from the proper object of their mission, they wrote to their society to send out a man specially for the colonists; and the Rev. Mr. Saltet was accordingly commissioned for this purpose. They received him with joy; but another pastor arriving soon after, with a commission from the German consistory of St. Petersburg, they were of course immediately resigned into his hands. Although the latter was an evangelical man, the colonists, having fled from Germany to escape a similar ecclesiastical authority, declared that they were under no consistory, and would have nothing to do with him. In support of their pretensions, they appealed to a promise to that effect from the emperor Alexander, which he had probably given, at least verbally. An account of the whole matter was sent to the consistory by their delegate; but before it was settled he died. About this time count Diebitch, who has since so distinguished himself in the Turkish war, arrived in Georgia. Being himself a pro-



testant, he took a deep interest in the colonies, and entered into the most full consultations with Mr. Saltet respecting their ecclesiastical affairs. At the suggestion of Diebitch, they were assembled in a council, and the plan of a separate religious establishment was drawn up, with the aid of the missionaries, and presented to the emperor. He consequently granted, that, agreeably to their request, they should be independent of the consistory; that they should be supplied with pastors from the society of Basle; and that Mr. Saltet should be the spiritual inspector of the whole. He also gave them 27,000 silver roubles (about 20,250 dollars) for the erection of a church and a parsonage in every colony, and 250 silver roubles (about 187 dollars) per annum for the support of each pastor. Two pastors, in addition to Mr. Saltet, had already arrived when we were in Georgia; one of whom was settled in Elizabeththal, and the other not yet located. We have also, since, met two others, one at Constantinople and one at Malta, on their way. Mr. Saltet's lamented death I have already mentioned. Subsequently, the Rev. Mr. Dittrich, at the request of the minister at St. Petersburg, addressed first to himself and then to his society, was appointed to his place. Rejoiced as we were that the colonies should obtain a spiritual director, so well qualified by talents and piety, and an intimate acquaintance from the beginning with all their spiritual concerns, we could not but sympathise with him, in the trial his feelings endured in view of the consequent interruption of his labours among the Armenians; and are on the whole gratified to learn, that the arrangement is likely to be overruled in favour of his remaining at Shoosha.

When the missionaries first arrived among the colonists, they were received with open arms, and were delighted to find every mouth full of the most pious conversation. They soon perceived, however, that much of it was a mere shew, and that a majority were at heart men of the world. Still, wherever they preached some profited, and proved themselves to be branches of the true vine. Under the excellent influence of Mr. Saltet, their spiritual state has improved; and it is hoped they will ultimately exert a most salutary influence upon the natives of the country.

*Aug. 9.* By the blessing of God upon our prescriptions, Antonio's fever left him yesterday, and nothing now prevented our starting but the want of a conveyance. With post horses, which we had authority to take, as the general at Kars had given us an



order without our knowledge, that extended even to the Persian frontier, we should be obliged to pass directly through Gánjeh. Such quarantines had been established on the road in consequence of diseases, that no one would take us to Shoosha in a waggon upon any condition. At last we persuaded a man to carry us to the next post beyond Gánjeh, without going through that place; but were obliged to pay him a considerable sum, on account of the quarantine of fourteen days to which he would thus subject himself on his return. We started at half past 3 P.M.

The east wind, even after the fog of the morning had subsided, had seemed all day surcharged with noxious vapours; and before reaching the column of Shamkór, I felt symptoms of approaching fever. Still we stopped a moment to examine that antiquity. It is built of brick, has winding stairs within to its top, and is said to be 180 feet in height. On a stone near the bottom is an inscription in the Arabic character, and another reaches nearly around it at the top, where it is also surrounded by a gallery with a door opening upon it from within. Its origin is not known, but it was evidently built for the same purposes as the minaret of a mosque. The other ruins of the place are the foundations of a large caravan-serai, and several small moslem tombs. Shamkór was a powerful and important city in the ninth and tenth centuries\*; but now not a human being inhabits its ruins. The small river which passes them, is divided and scattered over a large surface in canals; but very little use seems to be made of it for cultivation, as we saw only two or three small cotton fields. Mr. Dwight was now seized with the same febrile symptoms as myself, and the pains in our heads and limbs were so increased by the jolting of the waggon, that we became almost insensible to every object on the road. At half past 8 P.M. we stopped by a little rivulet for the night, and were surprised to find, that, notwithstanding our bargain with the waggoner, we were almost within a stone's cast of Gánjeh. We had not then been able to learn, what we afterwards ascertained, that the disease which existed there, was the cholera, and the uncertainty, perhaps, made us more fearful of the infected atmosphere, than if we had known the real extent of the evil. There was no remedy, however, and, racked with the pains of a burning fever, we lay down under our cloaks by the wheels of our waggon, in a

\* St. Martyn, vol. 1, p. 90.



much better state to indulge in delirious longings for the comfort of home than to sleep.

*Aug. 10.* After a night which I would rather forget than describe, we started again at half-past 4 A.M. with our fever uninterrupted. We passed Gánjeh by just skirting its suburbs on the east, instead of going directly through it. This city lays claim to Kobad, who reigned over Persia in the beginning of the sixth century, as its founder.\* It was called Kantság of the Aghováns by the Armenians, to distinguish it from Tebríz, which was also named by them Kantság. Its distinctive appellation was derived from the Aghováns, whose Catholicos resided here for some time; and under them, about the tenth and eleventh centuries, it attained its greatest importance.† I have already spoken of its passing from the hands of a Persian khan into those of the Russian emperor. In the last war with Persia, it was instigated by a mollah to rise upon and murder the Russian garrison that occupied it; and the greatest battle that occurred between the belligerent parties was fought in its vicinity.‡ It is still the most important place in this part of the Russian provinces, has about 12,000 inhabitants, and is the capital of a small province, which contains as many more, and produces considerable silk. The plain where it is situated is fertile and well watered; but, contrary to what seems to have been its character once, the site is considered peculiarly unhealthy. The Russians have given it the name of Elizabethpol.

On reaching the post-house at the Koorek-chai, 18 versts from Gánjeh, we found ourselves unable to proceed farther, and were obliged to stop for the day. It was a day of suffering and anxiety. The same pestiferous wind continued, and the scorching rays of the sun, either were in themselves uncommonly oppressive, or were made to seem so by the diseased state of our bodies. The houses of the post were little cabins sunk completely under ground, and the walls of the one we occupied were almost black with musketoes which tormented us all day and all night. Food or medicine we did not expect to find in such a place; nor did we need them, for we had no appetite for the one, and with the other we were supplied. Not the slightest article of convenience, not even a vessel for bathing our feet could be obtained, and a few rough planks for our bed was all that the post afforded. Yet even

\* Mod. Trav. Persia, vol. 1, p. 109.

† St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 150.

‡ Mod. Trav. Persia, vol. 1, p. 245.



in such circumstances did God give efficacy to the means we used for recovery, and kindly broke our fever.

*Aug. 11.* We arose extremely weak and without appetite, but the fever had left us, and the wind too had changed and purified the atmosphere. Starting at half-past 5 A.M. with post horses, we proceeded over the same level plain. It afforded nothing to note, except a few fields of rice and cotton irrigated by canals of the purest water, till we reached the next post, a distance of 18 versts. Finding no shelter from the sun so comfortable as the stable, we threw ourselves upon the ground there, and hardly rose till 5 o'clock P.M. Then we mounted again to accomplish another stage of 22 versts. The rivers which so abundantly water this plain are generally composed of perfectly pure and limpid water. We crossed this afternoon the only exception of a muddy one. Like all the others, it was divided into a great number of artificial canals, as if for purposes of irrigation, though, as usual, there was hardly any thing but uncultivated fields to be irrigated. At length, after crossing the main channel of the river Terter and all its numerous canals, we reached our post-house at 9 P.M. I had now been more than two days without eating any thing but a small bit of bread. We had indeed laid in at Anenfeld a stock of provisions similar to what we had provided at Tiflis, and for a similar reason; as on our road between Gánjeh and Shoosha we were to pass only naked Cossack stations; but I had no appetite for any thing. Happening now, however, to think of some arrow-root, which we had brought from Malta, I succeeded in swallowing a little. Another similar dish was the only nutriment I took till we reached Shoosha. Mr. Dwight was in almost as diseased a state as myself. The Cossacks at this post could furnish us with no place to lie upon but the open ground. They themselves slept upon a scaffold elevated several feet to avoid the musquitoes, which were here more numerous than can easily be credited. The bushes around the enclosure of the post were the next morning black with them. After trying various expedients in vain, I succeeded at last, by wrapping myself closely in a cloak, keeping on my boots, defending my hands with leather gloves, and tying a double handkerchief tight over my face, in getting a little sleep in an empty waggon.

On the same river, farther toward the Koor, there is a small village called Berdaah, and also the ruins of the city which once bore that name. It was the capital of the Armenian province of



Oodi, and in the eighth century was the residence of the kings of the Aghováns. It was often mentioned by the Arabian geographers as the chief city of this region, called by them Aran, and at one time there was no place nearer than Rey and Isfahán that would compare with it.\* The Oodians too, an Armenian tribe, that once inhabited this province, and toward the beginning of the tenth century, becoming almost independent, carried their arms to the Caucasus on the one side, and into Armenia on the other,† seem not to be entirely extinct. The German missionaries have found, in their travels in the province of Sheky, at a village called Vertashin, two or three hundred families of a peculiar denomination of Christians, called Oodi. Others of that name were also heard of in different parts of the same province. But their principal place of residence was found to be in the district of Char,‡ among the Lesgies, by whom they have been severely oppressed, and not allowed to have priests. As that district has now, however, come under Russian control, their condition is much improved. The Armenians say they once belonged to their church, while others affirm that they were of the Georgian faith. At any rate, they are now united to the Georgian church, and have Georgian and Russian priests. They are believed to speak a language peculiar to themselves.—At a little distance above the post, on the same river Terter, is a village of some 300 families of Nestorians, who emigrated from the province of Oormiah with the Armenians, when the Russian army retired from Persia. But as our informant had made them but one short visit, he could tell us little respecting them. It was reported that their priest had died, and that they had applied for one of the Russian church.

*Aug. 12.* At half-past 5 A.M. we commenced another stage of 30 verst. The rays of the sun, beating upon our diseased bodies from above, and reflected from a dry and dusty soil beneath, created, as the morning advanced, a degree of thirst that was almost intolerable, and which the infrequency of rivers here prevented us from quenching, as on other days, till we neared the post-house. Then a stream fresh from the mountains, which we had now approached, crossed our path, and offered us an abundance of the purest water. A cup doled it out in potions too small for my craving appetite, and I lay down by its side and drank in no measured quantities.

\* St. Martyn, vol. 1, p. 87.

† Ibid. vol. 1, p. 226.

‡ Probably the Dzanar of the Armenians. See St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 233.



I could not bear to leave it, and came back once to its farther side to repeat my draught. I was now too weak to support myself on horseback without much difficulty, but by alternately changing that position for the top of our baggage-waggon, succeeded in getting through this long stage. We reached the post-house, an old castle called Shah-boolák, at half-past 11 A.M., and remained until 6 P.M. Not far beyond our road entered the mountains, and the chillness of the night air that blew from them, added to our enfeebled state, made the next stage of 17 versts seem almost interminable. Before it was completed, our waggon broke down, and poured baggage and Antonio, who was riding upon it, into the road. Leaving him to guard it until fresh horses could be procured, we pushed on to the post-house, which we reached at half-past 11 at night. Our lodging place was the musqueto scaffold, raised ten or twelve feet from the ground, and undefended by the slightest covering. The mountain breeze that swept over us seemed to chill us to the heart; the Cossacks, who lay by our side, talked and snored, and shook our frail platform by their motion; the trouble of bringing up our baggage caused loud talking and scolding among the sūrijies till almost morning, and all together produced such an effect upon my weak nerves, that to sleep was impossible, and I lay and wept like a child.

*Aug. 13.* The morning sun shewed us Shoosha, elevated high before us at the end of a long mountain ravine. Though so far below it, we had already sensibly changed climates. The fresh herbage of beautiful meadows and pastures in the valleys, and the verdure of the trees that clothed the sides of the mountains, afforded a delightful contrast to the parched plains we had left. After a stage of seventeen versts, the latter part of which was a long and steep ascent of a mountain, we reached the quarantine ground of Shoosha. Through the mediation of the missionaries, and the politeness of the commandant, our baggage was only subjected, unopened, to the *form* of smoking, and after three or four hours we found a home with our Christian brethren and sisters in the mission-house. We immediately forgot the fatigues and exposures of the journey in the kindness and comforts which surrounded us, while they, instead of being surprised at our illness, wondered that we had accomplished so unwholesome a ride with no more injury; and all of us united in admiring the goodness of



God, through which we had been led to escape even thus from the destructive epidemic, which it now appeared was hurrying off its victims in every direction.

It was at Shoosha that we found a refuge from the cholera, while it passed by us through the isthmus between the Caspian and Black Seas, on its way to Europe, where it has since committed such fearful ravages. After having been several years advancing from India, it made its appearance at Reshd, on the southern shore of the Caspian, before the last cold season was gone. Thence, in the summer, it spread over Aderbaiján, on the one side, where, together with the plague, which followed it, it carried off about 36,000 souls, among which was a tenth of the population of Tebriz, while on the other, it broke out at Bakoo. From Aderbaiján it spread into Nakhcheván and Eriván, where about 700 died of it. From Bakoo it continued along the shore of the Caspian, and branched off into the valley of the Koor. In the latter direction Shámakhy, Gánjeh, and Tiflis, felt its ravages. At Gánjeh two hundred had already died of it when we passed along. In the neighbouring colony of Helenendorf ninety-four were attacked, but under the medical treatment of Mr. Hohenacker, the physician of this mission, who happened to be there, only twenty-nine died. His chief prescription was calomel and opium, and in every case where salivation was produced it proved effectual. At Tiflis, where it broke out while we were on the road to Shoosha, the number of deaths was variously estimated from three to ten thousand. The inhabitants deserted the town and it ceased. On the shore of the Caspian, it passed through Kooba and Derbénd to Kizlár, and then spread along the line of the Terek. In the whole government of the Caucasus, it is supposed to have destroyed as many as in Aderbaiján. So that while we were at Shoosha, more than 70,000 died of it in the regions around us.

We hoped for some time, that the elevated situation of that town would defend us from it; though the inhabitants feared it excessively, and Armenians and moslems endeavoured, each according to their respective superstitions, to appeal to the clemency of the Deity. We shall long remember to what a pitch our compassion was excited for the latter, as they passed repeatedly by our window in formal procession, bare-headed, with banners flying, and calling



loudly upon God, on their way to their cemetery, where they hoped their prayers would be more effectual. We could distinguish nothing but *ya Allah! ya Allah!* (oh God! oh God!) uttered in different tones as fast as the sounds could be repeated. At length it made its appearance among us; but in so mild a form that few died of it. In the mission-house, however, we had a severe case in the person of the Rev. Mr. Zaremba, a valuable member of the mission. He had been at Tiflis during the worst of it there, and Mr. Saltet had died in his arms. Soon after he arrived in Shoosha, he was seized himself, and speedily the symptoms of approaching death cut off all hopes of his recovery. But God heard the prayers of his anxious brethren, and raised him up from the grave. We left him convalescent; but his enfeebled constitution has since obliged him, much to the sorrow of all his associates, as well as his own, to relinquish the mission, and return to his native Poland. No one, so far as we heard, thought of the cholera's being contagious like the plague, until the doctrine of quarantines was brought down from Russia, after it had almost ceased in the trans-Caucasian provinces.

Not only the prevalence of the cholera around rendered a long delay at Shoosha expedient, but our own ill health, and especially mine, made it absolutely necessary. We all arrived there invalids. I was extremely weak, my blood seemed to circulate without force, and I felt as if I had been poisoned. I was not surprised, therefore, at being seized, a week after our arrival, with the ague and fever; but grateful that Providence caused the disease to assume so mild a form. Antonio was next attacked by the same disease, and Mr. Dwight soon after with a more severe remittent. Every case, however, easily yielded to medicine, and in a few days we were all convalescent. My hopes of speedy recovery were soon disappointed by a relapse, which was followed by another and another, which not only prevented me from leaving, but almost confined me to the house, till the first of November. Nor did the evil end then; the seeds of disease implanted in the valley of the Koor, produced constant returns of the ague and fever in both Mr. Dwight and myself, for more than a year, and were only eradicated, in my case, by calomel, after our return to Malta. There must have been something extremely deleterious in the atmosphere at that time, affecting the general health even of those in whom it did not produce the cho-



lera. Although only one of the six persons who composed the mission family, had the cholera, not one remained in good health. Some of the time almost every one was confined to his room, and the house was like a hospital. We were able to meet for divine worship only the first Sabbath after our arrival. And Mr. Dittrich was obliged to be carried away for a change of air, sometime before we left.

We were pained in the extreme, to add, by our presence and sickness, to the cares of families thus worn down themselves by disease. But the hospitality and kindness we experienced from them, were not, in consequence of their afflicted circumstances, the less cheerfully given; and they have, I trust, impressed upon our hearts an indelible sense of gratitude to those beloved Christian brethren. It is not only for comforts contributing to the restoration of our health, and, perhaps, even to the prolongation of our lives, however, that we are indebted to the missionaries at Shoosha. To them, especially to Mr. Dittrich, whose cultivated mind was stored with well digested information respecting the Armenians, are you to credit most that is valuable in the results of our tour. Whenever his and our own health would permit, we sat down with him, pen in hand, and brought under review the several topics of inquiry suggested in our instructions. And though, in the form in which our journals are finally embodied, the information thus elicited is so scattered through every part, that we are unable to give credit for the individual facts and opinions, we cheerfully confess, that, however small may be the value of our communications, they would not have possessed the half of that, especially in a missionary point of view, had we never visited Shoosha.\*

\* Finding Mr. Dittrich possessed of so much valuable information respecting the Armenian church, we urged him to present it to the Christian public in a publication of his own, and have been gratified to learn from him since that such a work has been prepared and printed. We have not yet had access to it.





## LETTER X.

## SHOOSHA.

Description of the town—Province of Kara-bagh—The Aghováns—Adjacent provinces—Tenure of lands—Nomads—Language of the moslems—Their domestic state—Moral character—Religious opinions—Priesthood—Intellectual state of the Armenians—Family education—Desire for education—Education of females—Number of schools—School books—Sources of intelligence—Modern Armenian language.

DEAR SIR,

SHOOSHA is the capital of the province of Kara-bagh, which embraces the ancient Paidagarán, with parts of Oodi, Artsákh and Süník, and occupies the space between the Koor and the Aras at their junction, being washed by them on two sides for some distance. In the reign of Nadir Shah, somewhat more than eighty years ago, the Armenian chiefs, who had then gained a sort of independence in its mountainous interior, were forced, by their own dissensions, and the power of that conqueror, to receive a moslem khan for their governor. He built the town of Shoosha, and called it *Penáh-abád*, or city of Penáh, which was his own name. That name is now almost lost in the more common one of *Shoosha-kulaasy*, or fortress of Shoosha (written in Armenian, Shooshi), which it has borrowed from a neighbouring village. His memory, however, is effectually preserved in a coin that was struck by him, and the *penabád*, in this and the adjacent provinces, takes the place of the *abbas*, by which the name of the great Persian Shah is perpetuated in a coin at Tiffís. It was his son that lost the province by fleeing into Persia, and his grandson that now lives upon a Russian pension, as already related.

Nature has done much to render Shoosha impregnable. It is a mountain formed into a natural castle. The ravine by which we approached it, separates at its base into two, which, each with its stream of the purest water, continue up on either side. From the same point, an almost precipitous path winds, sometimes along the face of a ledge of rocks, a tedious distance to the gate at the top. On every other side a perpendicular precipice of a giddy height prevents the necessity of artificial defence, except at the Eriván gate. There, a tremendous chasm opening toward the mountains,



with the precipice rising up in two immense towers on each side, as if formed by nature to guard this weak spot in her fortification, is defended by a short wall. The top presents an uneven surface gently sloping to the north-east, of which the town occupies only a small space in the lowest part, and the remainder is covered with a green sward. So surrounded is it by rugged and weather-beaten mountains still higher than itself, that one is not aware of its elevation, till, from the edge of its precipice he looks into the frightful ravines around it, so deep, that the mountain torrents at their bottom seem only noiseless rills; or, through the opening formed by the ravine to the north, sees the valley of the Koor at a great distance below, or just discerns in the same direction, as far as the eye can reach, the giant Caucasus towering above all the adjacent peaks for nearly a quarter of the horizon.

The houses of the town are built of stone, frequently two stories high, and open to the streets like those of Georgia and Turkey. Unlike, so far as I recollect, every other place I had seen since leaving America, their roofs were covered with shingles; in the wooden pegs, however, by which, instead of nails, they were fastened, we did not recognise a custom of our country. They had in general a ruinous appearance; and one extremity of the continuous arcade of shops, which line the two sides of a street almost the whole length of the town, and forms its bazar, had been broken down by an earthquake. Its climate was as cool as we had expected, but in regard to its salubrity our anticipations were not realized. It is by no means free from intermittent fevers and bilious affections. In my own case, I fancied that its water was particularly injurious. None but well-water is to be found within the walls, and all of that is so impregnated with saline matter, as to be very unpalatable. We at last procured what we had occasion to use, from a pure spring, just without the Eriván gate, and my health rapidly recovered.

The town itself contains about 2000 houses, of which 700 are Armenian, and the rest Mohammedan. The Armenians have two large and two small churches, which are served by fourteen priests. There is also a nunnery with one inmate. The moslems have two mosques. The province of Kara-bagh derives its name, which signifies *black garden*, from the extreme fertility of the alluvial plain of the Koor, which it embraces. Its interior is mountainous, and, in general, well wooded with a variety of forest trees. Armenians



and moslems, in nearly equal numbers, compose its population, and amount in all to about 50,000 souls. The former are under the jurisdiction of two bishops. One of them resides in the convent of Datev, and will be spoken of hereafter. The other spends his winters in Shoosha, and the remainder of his time in the convent of Kántसार, about a day's ride farther to the west; where he has a chorepiscopus, one vartabéd, and two deacons. He has sometimes been called a fourth Catholicos of the Armenians, in addition to those at Echmiádzin, at Sis, and at Aghtamář, which have been already mentioned. But his more proper title was Catholicos of the *Aghováns*; and the mention of him reminds me to say a word respecting that nation, which occupies so prominent a place in the history of these regions.

The Aghováns were called *Albani*\* by the Greeks and Latins, who describe them as the possessors of the whole valley of the Koor, from Georgia to the Caspian Sea. Their original country seems to have been between the Koor and the Caspian, and to have corresponded nearly with the modern Shirwán. According to Armenian tradition, it was called *Aghovánk*, after a prince of the race of Haig, who conquered it, and gave that name to its inhabitants.† They seem to have continued very intimately connected with the Armenians; though the latter allow that they spoke a different dialect, and the Romans and Greeks regarded them as a distinct people. Strabo affirms that they were more numerous than the Georgians, and could muster 60,000 armed men. From the first of the Armenian Arsacidæ they received a governor by the name of Aran‡; but in the third century of the Christian era, they threw off the yoke of Armenian rule, and probably never again submitted to it. In the subsequent wars of the Armenians with Persia, they took a hostile part; and though, when the Sassanian persecutions came upon both, they were allies for a time; yet, after the fall of the Arsacidæ of Armenia, the Aghováns made large encroachments upon several of the north-eastern provinces of that country, and even transferred the capital of their kingdom to the south of the Koor.§ Here they afforded an asylum to the Armenians, even after

\* The names are the same, for the Armenians always write the letter *l* in foreign names by *gh*, and the Greek *beta* has the sound of *v*.

† Chamchéán, p. 1, c. 2.

‡ St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 218.—Perhaps the name by which the Saracens knew this region was derived from him.

§ Chamchéán, p. 3, c. 16, 22; p. 4, c. 1. St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 220.



Armenia had fallen before the Saracens; and the Seljookian Malik-shah got possession of their country only by marrying their queen.\*

The gospel was preached to the Aghováns by a grandson of Gregory Loosavorich, and he is supposed to have founded the see of their Catholicos, which, at different times, had Gánjeh, Berdaah, and Kántसार for its seat. They shared in the monophysite heresy with the Armenians from the beginning; and there seems to have been uniformly a good understanding between the primates of the two nations.† We hear little or nothing of the Aghováns in this region, since the invasion of Timoor; of whom tradition asserts, that he transported numbers to Kandahár, where their descendants are now called Afgháns.‡ The nomadic tribes of Kara-bagh are said to have, even now, a corresponding tradition, that the Afgháns and they have exchanged countries. Difficult as it may be to believe in the transportation of an entire nation, we encounter almost as great a difficulty in whatever way we attempt to account for its total disappearance.§ Once they had a written language of their own, having received letters from the inventor of the Armenian alphabet||; but now there is no relic of their dialect in books, and none also in the tongues spoken among the natives of the country, unless something should hereafter be discovered in a *patois*, which is said to be used by the peasants near Bakoo. Their name was preserved until recently, in connection with the see of Kántसार. But the Russians have now reduced its occupant to complete dependence upon Echmiádzin, and changed his title of Catholicos of the Aghováns, into that of a simple Armenian archbishop.

Shoosha is the usual residence of the governor of that division of the trans-Caucasian territories of Russia, which bears the name of Mussulman Provinces. It will be proper, therefore, from this point, to glance at Sheky and Shirwán, of which, together with

\* Chamcheán, p. 5, c. 16.

† Ibid. p. 3, c. 15; p. 4. c. 12.

‡ Chamcheán, p. 7, c. 1. Lett. Ed. et Cur. vol. 4, p. 25.

§ The difference of the two names has been urged as an objection to this tradition. But the mission library at Malta contains a history of the exploits of Nadir Shah, written in Armæno-Turkish by an Armenian who accompanied him to Delhi, in which the Afgháns are always called Aghováns. It is certain, however, that a people of that name existed at Kandahár some centuries before the time of Timoor. (See Langlès notes to Chardin.) An enterprising countryman of ours is now travelling in Afghanistan. After having already spent several years there, and ascended as far as Cabul, he came to Tebriz to make himself better acquainted with the history of the country, and returned again just before we reached that place. The acting English ambassador kindly lent us his journals. He found no Christians at Kandahár, nor in any part of the country, except a few Armenians at Cabul.

|| Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 28. Moses Choren. lib. 3, c. 54.



Kara-bagh, it consists; and also to say a word upon Daghistán. The capital of *Sheky* is Nookha. The province contains some villages of Armenians, and in the town a large number of that nation is assembled. Most of them, however, are strangers, drawn together by commercial enterprise; as an extensive trade with the Lesgies centres at that place.—Old Shámakhy long remained a deserted monument of the wrath of Nadir Shah, who, for the trouble it gave him in holding out a temptation for Lesgian and Russian invasions, razed it to the ground, A.D. 1734, and transferred its inhabitants and its name to another spot.\* But it has now resumed its honours as capital of *Shirwán*, and is fast becoming a place of consequence. Whether it will ever regain the great commercial importance it formerly had, is uncertain; but its salubrity and other advantages of situation bid fair to make it soon eclipse New Shámakhy, the deadly air of which has already caused it to sink into insignificance. The almost unequalled productiveness of that part of the province of *Shirwán* along the Koor, of which, under the name of the plain of Albania, Strabo asserts, “that its verdure is perpetual, that every fruit and plant comes to perfection uncultivated, that a field once sowed produces two or three crops, and that irrigation here is more perfect than in Babylonia or Egypt,” is still proverbial. I need only add, that, in later times, it is not less distinguished by extreme insalubrity, the thorn so usually implanted by Providence in the rose of fertility. In the town there are 200 families of Armenians, and in the province 50 villages of the same nation.†—The province of which Bakoo is the capital, contains 19,700 inhabitants, of which 5150 are in the city itself, and the rest scattered in 39 villages. Only 80 families of them are Armenians, and they are all in the city. Silk and saffron are among the principal productions of Bakoo, and the former is said to amount to 80,000 pounds a year. Naphtha is also among its exports, and the burning fountain in the vicinity of the city is still an object of worship to a few of the followers of Zoroaster, who resort thither from Persia and from India.‡—The territory of Kooba is said to

\* Jonas Hanway, vol. 2, p. 333.

† These numbers were given us by Mr. Zaremba, as the result of his own personal inquiries. They accord exactly with the statements of the Jesuits before the destruction of the place. See Lett. Ed. et Cur. vol. 4, p. 14, 34.

‡ The only relic of the fire-worshippers now existing in Persia is found in the city of Yezd. They are called Guebres, and amount to nearly 4000 families. Though extremely oppressed, they are distinguished by their enterprising commercial spirit, their wealth, and their general uprightness.



contain 60,000 souls, of which 5000 are in the town.\* A few of the villages are inhabited by Armenians, who are tenants of a Mohammedan lord. In the town their number is very small.—Derbénd contains 600 or 700 Armenians, among its 7000 or 8000 inhabitants; but in the villages belonging to it there are none.

Before separating the moslems from the Armenians, for distinct subjects of remark, permit me to say a word respecting the tenure by which the peasantry of both religions, in this vicinity, hold the lands they cultivate. We could not learn that such a thing as a freehold estate in the hands of a cultivator of the soil, is known in Kara-bagh. In Gánjeh the last khan owned not only the soil, but the persons of those who tilled it; the peasants of Shirwán were also serfs of their prince; and the same was true of nearly all in Bakoo. Of course, as the emperor succeeded to the rights of the former rulers, the peasants of those provinces are now serfs of the crown. In general, it may be said, that the soil is owned either by the crown, by Christian *meliks* (princes) and Mohammedan *begs* (lords or gentlemen), or by convents: and that its cultivators bear to its owners the relation, if not of slaves, at least of very degraded vassals. Government always claims of the peasant a poll-tax, which, though generally fixed at a ducat (about 2.25 dollars), sometimes varies, and amounts to two-thirds more. Whoever may be his landlord makes another still heavier exaction of services or produce, rather than money. It varies according to the will of different proprietors, so that it would be difficult to estimate its amount; but the universal poverty impressed upon houses, furniture, clothing, and all the necessaries of life, and meeting the traveller at every step, affords abundant proof that it is so heavy as to leave but the very scantiest means of subsistence. So far as we learned, too, that very important check upon oppression, which arises from the ability of the peasant to forsake at will an overbearing for a more tolerant master, is destroyed, by his being attached to the soil.

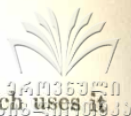
The moslems of these provinces, with the exception of a few Kürds in the mountains of Kara-bagh, who will be spoken of hereafter, are generally called by the Russians and other Europeans, *Tartars*. That name, however, is believed to be unknown among the natives of the country, for the Armenians call them *Toork*, and they name themselves *müsulmán*; and, as their language plainly

\* This statement is from Le Gamba; it seems incredibly large.



shews their origin to be purely Turkish, I see no occasion for using it. A part of them are wandering nomads, and the rest stationary inhabitants of villages. The condition of the latter, as cultivators of the soil, has just been explained. The former compose somewhat more than half of the moslem population of Kara-bagh and Talish; but in the provinces north of the Koor, their number is comparatively small. In the winter they collect along the warm banks of the Koor, and live in caves; being, in fact, as historical conjecture would make us believe all the inhabitants of the earth once were, *troglydtes*. As the warm season comes on, they issue from their confinement, and spread out their tents upon the plain; the drought soon cuts short their pasturage there, and forces them gradually to ascend the mountains; upon their highest summits, with their flocks and herds, they enjoy a cool climate and unwithering verdure during the hottest months; and then the approaching snows force them to descend again gradually toward their winter quarters. They live almost entirely upon the produce of their flocks, and only cultivate grain enough in the plain to furnish bread for the winter months. Inconvenient as their mode of life is, the charm of freedom exalts it, in their estimation, far above the slavish condition of a tenant. Government designs, it is said, to induce them, by a grant of peculiar privileges, to locate themselves as cultivators of the soil; but hitherto, suspicions on their part of sinister designs, and the want of a properly organized plan on the part of government, have prevented any considerable result. In Shirwán, however, some have forsaken the nomadic life. Their origin and habits are probably the same with those of the pastoral Turkish tribes of Persia. Still, there will be no error in classing them, for the following remarks, with the fixed Mohammedan population of these provinces; if we merely bear in mind that, in their character, they are a little more honest, more free, and more inclined to robbery. Respecting the civil rights of both, I would just remark, that Mohammedanism is fully tolerated by the laws of Russia; its professors being burdened with no extra taxes, and generally admissible to office like Christians. We did not learn that they are ever draughted for soldiers; though in the Turkish war many voluntarily enlisted.

A few words respecting their language will serve to illustrate the state of education among them. It is a dialect of Turkish, differing from that of the Osmanlies of Turkey, of the Crim Tar-



tars, and of the Tartars of Kazán. The population which is not small, embracing nearly all the moslem inhabitants of the trans-Caucasian provinces of Russia, and of the north-western parts of Persia. It has none of the dignity and sweetness of the Constantinopolitan tongue; and differs so much from it in pronunciation, grammatical inflection, and meaning and arrangement of words, that persons speaking the two dialects can with difficulty comprehend each other; and the books of the Turkish capital are not intelligible here. It does not even hold the rank of a written language. We could not learn that any work has ever been printed in it at all, nor any composed, except by the missionaries at Shoosha.

The moslems not only possess very good natural talents, but are decidedly in advance of the Armenians in their desires and efforts for the education of their children. They have schools occasionally in the villages, and in the towns always. Shoosha has six schools. Even a number of their females, especially the daughters of mol-lahs, are taught to read, and in Nookha there is the phenomenon of a public school for moslem girls, which is not small. With the exception of the Korán, which is read in Arabic, but not understood, all their school books are in Persian, which language they study by means of grammars and dictionaries, not only for objects of business, but that they may read the distinguished poems which it contains. The latter attainment is the highest point at which their education aims. Still, comparatively few of them, and of the nomads very few, are able to read; and no improvement has been attempted or desired in their school books, not even that of having them in the vulgar dialect. Public or private libraries can hardly be said to exist; though many of the rich begs (or beys) have a number of books in Persian, which they are not remiss in reading.

Their domestic state, under the influence of a religion that views the conjugal relation in the light in which the Korán presents it, cannot but be miserable. Polygamy, however, though sanctioned by that authority, is not general. To have two wives may not be very uncommon; but a greater number is found only in the harems of khans and begs. It is prevented by the inability of the common people to support a multitude of women. Divorces, also, though placed by the law within the power of every husband, are rather uncommon in practice. They are prevented, like polygamy, not by any considerations of domestic quiet or affection, but of eco-



nomy, as the divorced wife is entitled to the restitution of her dowry. But, in the regard which the stronger sex has for the weaker, the abominable influence of the religion of Mecca is fully felt. Women are generally looked upon as an inferior race, made for the service and pleasure of the men, rather than as equal companions for the increase of their social enjoyments. With the exception of a few instances among the peasantry and the nomads, where something like pure conjugal affection sometimes appears, such a thing as esteem for females is apparently unknown. According to the spirit of the Mohammedan religion, the thought of them is always unchaste. As a natural consequence, they are confined, by being cautiously kept from the view of visitors, and rarely permitted to go abroad; and degraded to a rank that allows their voice almost no weight in the family, unless it in some instances derives a little from the fact that they have borne children. Some exceptions are found among the lowest peasants and nomads. Ladies of noble birth, too, occasionally enjoy much liberty, and assume no little authority. Indeed, it is not uncommon for a nobleman to be completely under the control of some favourite or troublesome wife. In such a domestic state, it is needless to remark, that real family government, producing uniform obedience, and respect of children toward their parents, does not exist.

Respecting the moral character of the moslems, you will expect me, though the task be unpleasant, to speak as plainly as I have done of their domestic state. They have the reputation of being inclined to robbery; but fear of the Russian government is so great, and so universal, that any actual attempt of the kind almost never occurs. In their habits of labour, though they find much leisure, and, instead of the active stirring industry of Europeans, seem to work with little energy, they ought not to be called an indolent people. The sacredness of truth they know not, but are so universally given to lying that their word can never be trusted. Profaneness, too, the most shocking, is heard from every body, and nothing is thought of it. The extreme jealousy of husbands renders infidelity of married females, it is believed, a rare crime. But many who are unmarried, especially in towns, abandon themselves to a life of sin. Unnatural vice, too, is not uncommon. In a word, the whole heart of the people is polluted. The most filthy conversation is in the mouths of all; it obtrudes itself upon the missionary in his most serious conversations; he hears it from the youngest



children as he passes through the streets. It has even affected the very state of the language.

In religious opinions, a part of the moslems of these provinces rank themselves with the *sünnies* (orthodox) of Turkey, and a part with the *sheeies* (sectarians) of Persia. Nearly all in Kara-bagh are sheeies, and the same is true of those who inhabit the towns of Bakoo and Derbénd. But in the country around, and in the provinces of Shirwán and Sheky, the *sünnies* are most numerous; and as you approach the mountains, whose moslem inhabitants are all of that sect, they form the mass of the population. Notwithstanding the bitter animosity and bloody wars that have separated the two sects for ages, they here live together without manifesting any hostility in the ordinary concerns of life. They would doubtless soon amalgamate, were they not reminded of their difference of sect, and taught to consider each other as enemies, by the feast of Moharim, which celebrates the martyrdom of Hossein, the son of Aly, the head of the sheey sect. In fact, they manifest little sincere regard for their religion at all. Few regularly perform the five stated daily prayers, and they are often neglectful of attending at the mosques; though in this respect there is great irregularity, and sometimes their meetings are crowded. In sentiment they are so lax, that, in argument, they will readily give up the mission of Mohammed, if their opponent will say nothing of the divinity of Christ; and they are, many of them, in reality, complete infidels. Yet they contend violently against the exalted character of Christ, and deem opposition to his religion, even when carried into persecution, a merit.

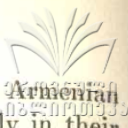
Their clergy of every rank bear the common name of *mollah*, with the exception of a very superior class who are called *müjtahids*. The former are about as numerous as the Armenian priests; the latter are extremely few, and are, I believe, peculiar to the sheeies. Shoosha has one, and there is one at Tifís with the title of chief müjtahid of all the sheey moslems of these provinces. The latter was the person who carried the keys of Tebriz to the Russians, as they approached that city in the last war, and invited them to enter. His present office is his reward. The authority of the müjtahids always extends over the mollahs of their own town, and those of a certain district around.

The education of the moslem clergy is various. Some children designed for that profession only learn to read of a common village



mollah; others seek the instructions of one more learned in the nearest town; others still go to a distinguished teacher at a greater distance; and those who wish to perfect their education, resort to the celebrated shrine of Hossein, at Kérbela, near Bagdád. Among them all, however, the number of those that can understand the Korán (which they have only in Arabic), is exceedingly small. With the exception of a few in towns, and now and then an individual in the villages, who are learned, they actually know little more than to read and write. In Persia, the appointment of the mollahs depends upon the müjtahids, and we did not learn that it is otherwise in these provinces. North of the Caucasus, government acknowledges but one mollah in a village, as entitled to the privileges of the order. These are, an exemption from taxes, a legal claim to his fees from the people, and, in some instances, perhaps in all, pecuniary aid from government. If in any case a village has two mollahs, the second has no such rights. It is not known that these laws have been formally promulgated south of the Caucasus, but they are believed to be acted upon as circumstances are supposed to render it expedient.

The support of the moslem clergy arises from a contribution given by the people, each individual's proportion of which is regularly understood, from gifts at certain festivals, and from fees for particular services. To those who are engaged in teaching, that is also a source of profit; and others seek additional income by engaging, like common people, in husbandry and trade. Their duties, besides teaching, which is considered as almost exclusively belonging to them, are to lead the devotions of the mosk, to read the Korán on particular occasions, and to perform the other ceremonies of their religion. Preaching rarely occurs, and then is performed by persons specially appointed. Particularly during the thirty days preceding the feast of Moharim are pains taken thus to provide that all the sad tales connected with the event which it celebrates shall be duly narrated. Their influence is sufficiently great to procure from the people at least the show of obedience. It springs, however, rather from a reverence for the clerical office than for any respect for the persons of the mollahs, for the former is sincere, but the latter is little more than external. In real principle they are no farther from infidelity than the people, though they sometimes make a show of great zeal. Nor is their moral character at all more exemplary. They are generally, however, in favour of



education, and in this respect decidedly surpass the Armenian clergy. In fact, it is believed that education is entirely in their hands.

Most of the information which we obtained from our missionary brethren at Shoosha respecting the *Armenians* is introduced in other places, as occasion presents the different topics to which it relates. I shall give here only so much as will serve to illustrate their intellectual condition, mingling with it the results of our own observations and inquiries, in order to give my remarks a general application to the whole of Armenia which we visited.—At home, very young children here, as in every part of the world, are left almost entirely to the management of their mothers. But unfortunately an Armenian mother has too little education, and holds too low a rank in the family herself, to instruct their minds or govern their passions to any good effect. The father is indeed sufficiently absolute in power, but, instead of being led to a steady and firm exercise of it by a wisely directed desire for the good of his child, undisciplined parental affection makes him forget it in injurious indulgence, until it is called forth with altogether disproportioned severity by some sudden fit of anger. The result is, that that invaluable instinct, of which nature has given an Armenian parent his full share, most unhappily directly fosters a rapid growth of evil passions in the child, causes him to become disobedient and vicious, and finally eradicates from his heart all corresponding filial affection.

As to the instruction in books which is usually obtained in schools, the common people have so little desire to procure it for their offspring, that they are not only not willing to make any sacrifices for it by contributing to bear the necessary expenses, but will hardly bring themselves to exercise sufficient parental authority to induce their children to a punctual attendance at school. Still there is no prejudice against the education of boys; and were schools established gratuitously, they would, like a sick man when medicine is brought to him, take them. After a while, a taste for education would be acquired, and then they would help themselves. The small effects that have resulted from the mere toleration of education by the Russian government, already alluded to, most clearly illustrate and prove that the Armenians need something more than being negatively left to themselves. Some positive stimulus must rouse them from their lethargy of ignorance.

The education of girls is not only not desired, but decidedly dis-



liked, and in some places the prejudice against it is strong. Its novelty gives alarm; an ability to read is considered a qualification hardly becoming any but nuns; an immoral tendency is apprehended; and the shocking custom of writing letters to gentlemen is specially dreaded! As might be expected, therefore, the number of females that can read is extremely small. An estimate founded, indeed, upon very scanty data, would not make the proportion so great as one in two hundred. We heard of no female school in actual existence throughout the whole of Armenia; and the only one of whose history we learned, was kept about twenty years ago in a nunnery at Akoolis, on the northern bank of the Aras to the east of Nakhchevân. It contained about sixty pupils. The nunnery has been destroyed, and the scattered nuns no longer teach. Its happy effects, however, are still manifested, by the existence in that vicinity of a decided wish for the education of girls, and of a more than usually strong desire for that of boys also. Two or three girls are allowed to read in a boy's school at Gánjeh and at Shámakhy; at Shoosha also the same is tolerated in a school of ten or twelve boys taught by a nun. But farther than this, it is not known that girls are found in any school, either in Russian, Prussian, or Turkish Armenia; and there is a decided prejudice against allowing the two sexes to attend together.

The proportion of males who are able to read is estimated by the missionaries, in the region that has come under their observation, at two in ten for the towns, and two, or, at the most, three in a hundred for the country. The result, also, of inquiries made by ourselves personally in the villages we visited at different points of our journey, and of estimates obtained from individuals respecting many others, presents for the country an average of little more than *two per cent!* This small number consists generally of the priests and their assistants in the church services. Even of them many are unable to write, and some even to read writing. This estimate is believed to be a very near approximation to the truth; still, perfect accuracy cannot be expected where the premises are so few and the conclusion so extensive.

It is much easier to count the number of schools, and estimate the means of education which they afford. In Kara-bagh, not including the schools of the mission, which will be mentioned hereafter, there are, in Shoosha itself, one of thirty scholars taught by a vartabéd, and another of ten or twelve taught by a nun; in



the country, a vartabéd who occupies alone the convent of St. Hagóp, has long made himself useful by teaching from 10 to 20 boys; and some 20 lads from the neighbouring villages are also taught at the convent of Datev. Gánjeh has a school of 30 scholars, and Shámakhy another of 80. There is one likewise in Sheky. Bakoo has none. Nakhcheván is also destitute. But at Eriván there are two, one lately commenced in the town, and another in Ashterág, a neighbouring village. It was reported also, that not far from Gümry the people were anxious for a school, and had commenced gathering one. If we add to these the schools already mentioned in Erzroom, Kars, Bayezed, and Tiflís, the first three of which have in fact been destroyed, and consider that in Persian Armenia, as will hereafter be seen, there are none; we have, at the most, only 14 native Armenian schools of any kind in the whole of the region over which our inquiries extended.

The schools of this and the adjoining provinces are all taught by men who hold some clerical rank, which in part unites their interests with those of the clergy, being either vartabéds, priests, deacons, or clerks. They are generally men of slight education, and their pupils are taught little else than to read mechanically without understanding, to write, and to perform some simple sums in arithmetic. In Gánjeh, however, grammar is taught; and through the influence of the mission, it is coming into use elsewhere. The study of it is very important, as affording a key to the ancient language in which their only books of any kind, including the Bible, are written.

Their school books are the following, and in the following order. For spelling and reading, a spelling-book, the first of the nine divisions of the Psalms divided into syllables, a small prayer-book, the remainder of the Psalms, the four Gospels, and the church hymn-book, are used; and all of them, being in the ancient dialect, are not understood. In arithmetic, a large and able work has been printed at Venice, but, on account of the difficulty of obtaining, and also of understanding it, as it is in the ancient tongue, no book is used, and the science is taught orally. In grammar, a similar difficulty was formerly experienced, as only a few copies of the large one by Chamcheán could be obtained; but recently two others, one by Michael Salamteán, of Moscow, and another by the missionaries, have been partially introduced. Should any Armenian student wish to advance farther (which, however, never happens,



except with some learned vartabéd in a convent), he would find in geography, nothing but a great work in twelve volumes, printed at Venice, and exceedingly rare; rhetoric he could learn only from a thick octavo from the same press, filled with the technical terms of the old school of Quintilian, and which he would hardly be so fortunate as to find; and logic, metaphysics, and moral philosophy, he would have access to, only in a very scarce work of three volumes, also from Venice, and wholly conformed to the Aristotelian school. As to improvements in the system of education, I need only say, that none have been made.

The sources of intelligence accessible to the people, are even more easily summed up than their means of education. Not a newspaper is printed any where in the Armenian language; and a mere glance at the location of the different printing presses already mentioned, will shew how few publications of any kind can find their way hither. We have only to add a press at Echmiádzin, which has not been in operation for about twenty years, to the establishments at Venice, Constantinople, Moscow, Astrakhán, and Tifís, and our list of presses of native origiu, that can possibly have any bearing upon Armenia, is complete. The efficiency even of these most unfortunately diminishes rapidly, in proportion to their nearness to that country; so that the sum of their united influence which actually reaches it, becomes almost imperceptible. A new book in circulation is an extremely rare phenomenon, and to hear one inquired for with interest is still rarer. Little more is accomplished than to supply the churches with the necessary books for public worship. In fact, the prayer-book, the hymn-book, and the book of martyrology, are almost the only sources of intelligence to be found, and even these, with the exception of the latter, which unfortunately is in a style sufficiently modern to allow its fabulous legends to be understood, are sealed up in a dead language. I wish the Sacred Scriptures could be added to the list, not only of accessible but of intelligible books; but, besides the copies that have been distributed by the missionaries, they are very rarely to be met with out of the churches; even there only the prescribed lessons can sometimes be found; and in no case are they in the vulgar tongue. None, therefore, can understand them, nor any other books, except those who have studied the ancient dialect; how many such there are, you can judge from what has been already said of the means of education. Preaching, in other countries such an ex-



tremely valuable source of religious information, accessible alike to the learned and the unlearned, we can here hardly take into the account. A few family libraries exist, if a collection of sixty or seventy books can be so named, but they are carefully stowed away, and the more valuable works perhaps folded in a covering of two or three handkerchiefs; so that the owners themselves rarely read them, and access to them by others is extremely difficult.

Permit me to add a few remarks upon the modern language of the Armenians to this view of their intellectual condition. Its variations are almost as numerous as are the countries where the scattered members of the nation reside, and all so corrupt, that the uneducated can, it is believed, no where understand even the general meaning of books in the ancient tongue. These numerous variations, however, may be considered as embraced in *two* dialects, differing, so that, while all who speak any of the branches of one of them, are mutually understood, they are unable to comprehend a book written for those who speak the other. As one has Constantinople for its centre, it may be named the dialect of Constantinople; while the other, from its being spoken in Armenia, may be called after the celebrated mountain in the centre of that country, the dialect of Ararat. The former, it is believed, extends from the capital of Turkey, through Asia Minor, and the pashalik of Erzroom, and has borrowed not only many terms, but also forms of construction from the Turkish. The latter is spoken throughout the rest of Armenia, and both in the words used, and in their arrangement, is nearer the original language. The missionaries here, from whom we received this theory, know that books printed for Constantinople, are not understood in these parts, while their own in the dialect of Ararat, have been found perfectly intelligible throughout the Georgian provinces, the pashaliks of Kars and Bayezed, the province of Aderbaiján, and even at Bagdad.

In the dialect of Constantinople, several works have been printed, especially at the press in Venice, and a translation of the New Testament has been published at Paris, by the British and Foreign Bible Society. But in the dialect of Ararat, the books printed by the missionaries here, are the only ones, so far as we learned, that exist. It is a curious fact, that we found not an Armenian, in our whole journey, that did not speak at least two languages. One of them was always Armenian, and the second generally a dialect of Turkish. Of these, Armenian in Armenia itself is much the best



understood, and for that reason, as well as because those who speak it are partial to it, on account of its being their native, and also a Christian tongue, is undoubtedly to be preferred to Turkish, for missionary publications for that region.

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## LETTER XI.

### SHOOSHA.

Design of the German mission at Shoosha—Colony contemplated—Missionaries arrive in Georgia—Plan of a colony fails—Reasons for labours among the Armenians—Interruptions of the mission—Travels among the moslems—Publications for them—Mode of dealing with them—Their reception of the truth—Delicacy of the Armenian department—Travels among the Armenians—Mission schools—Conversion of two deacons—Operations of the press—Persecution of the mission—General results.

DEAR SIR,

THE original design of the missionary society of Basle, in Switzerland, respecting their mission in these provinces, was, that it should be located somewhere within the Russian boundaries on the Persian frontier, between the Caspian and Black Seas, for the purpose of propagating Christianity among *Mohammedans*, especially in Persia. The first step was taken in 1821, by sending the Rev. Messrs. Dittrich and Zarembo, to St. Petersburg, to obtain the approbation of the emperor, and a charter for a colony.

The necessity for the appendage of a colony arose from the nature of the ecclesiastical principles of the Russian government. The established church is understood to claim the right to baptize and hold in its communion all converts within the limits of the empire, who are not made by any of the tolerated Christian sects. Foreign missionaries, therefore, as such, labour under serious embarrassments. The expedient of a colony, consisting of a large proportion of lay members, engaged in agriculture and the mechanic arts, and possessing chartered rights as citizens of the empire, divests them of their foreign character. Connected with it, they come to stand in the light of ministers of a tolerated sect of the empire, and are thus entitled to the right of making converts from nations not



Christian. A charter for such a colony was given by Alexander to the Scottish missionaries at Karass, in 1802, which has been renewed by the present emperor, for the express purpose of allowing the missionaries to preach the gospel to the mountaineers of the Caucasus.

The German missionaries found the disposition of the emperor Alexander not less favourable to them than it had been to their Scottish brethren. In a private interview of some length, he laid aside the attitude of an emperor for that of a Christian brother, entering with interest into their plans, and developing freely his own Christian experience. Alluding to the temptations which surrounded him, and his need of divine grace to direct his influence aright, he earnestly besought an interest in their prayers. Wishing them success in their enterprise, he promised, that if they needed any thing in addition to the provisions of their charter, their requests, directed to him personally, would be readily attended to. And they left him with a favourable impression of his piety, which they retain to the present day. The provisions of their charter were liberal. They were to travel in the trans-Caucasian provinces for the purpose of selecting a site for a colony, which, when it should be formed, was to have the privileges of Karass, including the liberty of baptizing converts. And they were to be allowed to have a printing press; to establish elementary schools, subject only to the immediate inspection of the minister of education; and to organize a seminary for teaching the higher branches of science.

At St. Petersburg the two brethren were joined by three others, one of whom, however, died at that place. The four survivors proceeded in 1822, to Astrakhán, for the purpose of studying languages, and there were hindered by sickness and other causes, so that they did not reach Tiflis till the spring of 1823. The attention of Messrs. Dittrich, Zaremba, and a third brother, who were the only ones that then arrived in Georgia, was first arrested by the German colonies. The part they took as advisers in organizing their ecclesiastical matters has been already explained. You will observe, however, that no connection has ever existed between the colonies and the mission. Their time was thus occupied until the autumn.

When the documents relative to their mission were laid before General Yermoloff, who was then governor of these provinces, he



informed them, to their surprise, that government possessed no land on the Persian frontier that could be spared for a colony, and of course such an establishment could not be formed. He declared, however, that they should be welcome to a building and garden spot for themselves, simply as missionaries, in any town or village they might select; that they were at liberty to commence their labours immediately; and that, if they should be blessed with converts, he would use his influence that they might have the privilege of receiving them to their own communion by baptism. The colony they had ever considered a serious evil, and were glad to be relieved from it; but to lose this important privilege they deeply regretted. Neither the promise of the governor, nor the friendly disposition of the emperor, and of his minister Galitzin, ever availed to secure it to them.—They left Tiflis for Shoosha early in September. At Helenendorf, near where we were ourselves attacked by sickness, one of their number died. The surviving two, Messrs. Dittrich and Zarembo, fixed upon Shoosha for the seat of their mission, at their first visit, but continued their journey as far as Shámakhy and Bakoo.

They had hitherto had in view only Mohammedans, as the object of their labours. But on becoming acquainted with the people among whom they were thrown, they found a large Armenian population, who were without schools, and so ignorant, that the Armenian Scriptures which the brethren had with them, could be read by few, and understood by still fewer. So unchristian, too, was their character, that all arguments intended to convince moslems of the excellence of Christianity, were parried by a reference to them (the only representatives of Christianity at hand), as triumphant proof that its practical influence was no better than that of Mohammedanism. The Armenians themselves said, “Why do you pass by us and go to the moslems? come to our aid; establish schools for us!” Touched by their wants, and feeling, in fact, that efforts for the undermining of Mohammedanism would be of little avail, so long as they should be paralyzed by such sad examples of Christianity, the missionaries determined to do something, if possible, for the Armenians. Letters were addressed to the archbishop Nérses, at Tiflis, and to the Catholicos, at Echmiádzin, explaining the condition in which their people had been found, and expressing the hope that their Christian brethren of the west of Europe, would aid by their charities in the establishment of schools,



provided that in those schools the New Testament and Psalter might be used as school books. To these letters no answer was ever received. It is interesting and encouraging to missionaries in Turkey, where the laws of the country oppose obstacles to their directly attempting the conversion of moslems, and oblige them to confine their instructions almost exclusively to the native Christians, to find these brethren, where the accessibleness of the two sects is nearly reversed, led by evident expediency to a similar course. In fact, the reformation of Christians seems an almost indispensable preliminary to the conversion of moslems.

Mr. Dittrich now returned for a season to Germany, and Mr. Hohenacker, who had until then remained at Karass, proceeded to Shoosha, that Mr. Zarembo might not be alone. Here Messrs. Pfander and Woehr subsequently joined them, but the latter was soon removed by death. Mr. Zarembo, at this period, opened a school for teaching Russian. It was attended by Armenians, and a few moslems. The Sacred Scriptures were his only school books, and he had the satisfaction of perceiving, that not all of his pupils remained unaffected by what they read. The society, in the mean time, on learning the condition of the Armenians, consented that two of their missionaries should devote their labours to them; and sent Messrs. Dittrich and Haas to Moscow for a year to study their language. Thence Mr. Dittrich was called to St. Petersburg, to attend to the expediency of uniting the Shoosha and Karass missions as branches of the same colony. Such a union was found unadvisable, and the project was abandoned. Mr. Haas made an attempt to join his brethren at Shoosha, but the Persian war prevented, and he stopped on the other side of the Caucasus.

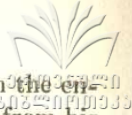
That war put the mission in great peril. It was commenced without the formality of a declaration, and the whole Persian army marched directly upon Shoosha, before Gen. R., who was then its governor, had time to make any preparation of troops, ammunition, or stores. The town was besieged for six weeks by about 50,000 Persians, commanded by Abbas Mirza in person, while the Russian garrison within, hardly amounted to more than 600. Its batteries were mounted by only two guns, one of which was almost useless; of powder and provisions only very small quantities were on hand; and the moslem population secretly favoured the enemy. Had it surrendered, the missionaries have reason to believe that they might have fallen a prey to the enmity which their previous



operations had excited in some of its more bigoted Mohammedan inhabitants. But the Lord defended them, and the siege was raised.

It was in 1827, that the missionaries were first assembled at Shoosha, in circumstances to give form to their plans of operation. They were five in number, viz. Dittrich, Zaremba, Haas, Hohenacker, and Pfander. A part of their arrangement was, that Messrs. Zaremba and Pfander, who, together with Mr. Hohenacker, were to labour for the moslems, should spend most of the year in travelling, and the remainder in visiting the people in the bazárs of Shoosha, or in preparing such books and tracts in the vulgar Turkish dialect, as might be usefully circulated. In prosecution of this plan, Sheky, Shirwán, Bakoo, Daghistán as far as Derbénd, Nakhcheván, and Eriván, have been traversed. Recently, also, as has been already related, an extensive tour has been made in Turkey. Persia, which was the primary object of their mission, it was thought superfluous to visit, while so much needed to be done directly around them. Then came the war to prevent any such movement; and after its close, the two newly acquired provinces claimed prior attention. Recently Mr. Pfander, in order to make himself familiar with Arabic and Persian, has accompanied Mr. Groves to Bagdád, with the intention of spending some time in Persia. No other visit has been made by them to that country.

In the preparation of books, they could for a long time find almost no native help. The Armenians were unable to write Turkish, and the moslems were so reluctant to contribute their aid to the circulation of the opinions of the missionaries, as to consent only with great reluctance even to copy the smallest articles. At length Providence furnished them with a very competent helper. He was born of Armenian parents, in an obscure village on the Aras, in this province, and was named by them Harütün. During a war between Persia and Russia, in 1810, a moslem khan of Karadagh, at the head of a horde of robbers, crossed the Aras, plundered his village, and carried him, then a mere boy, into captivity. Mohammedanism of course now became his religion, and with it he received the name of Mirza Ferookh. He was soon sent as a present to one of his master's wives, who resided at Tehrán; and she, having recently lost a son of about the same age, adopted him as her own child. No pains were spared in his education, the best masters were employed to teach him, and he was instructed in all



the literature of Persia. Eight years passed away thus in the enjoyment of uninterrupted maternal partiality and fondness from his new mother; when the khan, heedless of her remonstrances, took him away to be afterward about his person. For nine years he was the companion of his master, almost constantly travelling in different provinces of the kingdom. But he still remembered his parents and his native village. The last Russian war afforded him an opportunity he had long wished, and, escaping at the hazard of his life, he returned to the home of his childhood. He yet retained his Mohammedanism for a time, but at length embraced again the religion of his fathers. Wishing to add a knowledge of Russian to his other attainments, he came to put himself under the instructions of Mr. Zarembo, at Shoosha, and was thus introduced to the missionaries. As a translator, his qualifications have given them entire satisfaction. He has accompanied Mr. Zarembo in two missionary tours, and proved himself a valuable assistant. Being little attached to the errors of his church, he is a candid receiver of religious instruction. And if not already truly a Christian, the missionaries hope that he is not far from the kingdom of God. Thus, by leading him in a way that he knew not, has Providence prepared him admirably to assist in one of the most important and difficult branches of missionary labour.

With his aid the missionaries have made copious extracts of such parts of the Scriptures as they wished to read to the moslems in their travels; have translated a small tract; and have composed another on the truth of Christianity and falsity of Mohammedanism. He has likewise translated the whole of the New Testament, and only a revision is needed to prepare it for the press. Mr. Hohenacker has made some progress in composing a grammar of the Turkish of these provinces. No other books, so far as is known, have ever been composed in that dialect; and even none of these have yet been printed. Hitherto the missionaries have been destitute of Arabic types, nor, on account of the poverty of their society, have they any expectation of being supplied, except through the aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which has promised to transfer hither a font in its possession at Astrakhán. Unfortunately, they are so different from the Persian form of letters, that books printed with them would hardly be read. A font of the new types with which the latest edition of the Persian Testament has been printed at London, would be a real acquisition. No at-



tempt has hitherto been made to collect a regular congregation, to establish schools, or to prepare school books, from a conviction that neither would succeed. Lately, however, some hopes have been entertained that a school might be commenced at Shoosha.

The chief aim of the missionaries in their intercourse with the moslems has been to urge as directly and simply as possible, "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Instead of endeavouring to gain respect by paying liberally for their entertainment, they have aimed to go among them, as far as possible, in the spirit of those who were commanded to "provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses." On entering a village, they have inquired who was willing to entertain them, and thrown themselves upon his hospitality. The consequence has been, and it is no unimportant one, that report has never accused them of endeavouring to make proselytes by money; and though an individual has occasionally presented himself as an inquirer, evidently with the hope of some wordly advantage from them or from the Russians, the number has been small. The moslems even accuse them of want of wisdom in this respect. Once, after a long conversation in the bazár of Bakoo, their hearers proposed to meet them again at a certain hour upon the sea-shore. The hour arrived, but none except the missionaries came. At last, a venerable old moslem approached them and said, "Friends, your arguments are all very good, but allow me to tell you, that you do not take the right course: arguments alone will accomplish nothing; you should use money too; with that you can make as many Christians as you choose."

From the fact that many of the moslems do not really believe their own religion, nor practise it any farther than its precepts agree with their carnal inclinations, we might expect little difficulty in obtaining a candid hearing for the doctrines of Christianity. But if they care little about their own faith, they care less about any other; and the levity which allows them to laugh at Mohammedan doctrines and forms of worship assumes the form of absolute contempt for those of the gospel. In a word, their scepticism, instead of producing a disposition to inquire, has created absolute indifference, or rather a state of mind positively opposed to inquiry. For they are still deeply imbued with that part of Mohammedanism which consists in a bigoted enmity to Christianity, and consider opposition to it, or even the



murder of any moslem who may embrace it, a meritorious deed. This spirit the missionaries have found most prevalent in towns. Not having access to the people at their houses, they have talked with them in the bazárs and caravanserais. Conversations with individuals have often been long and interesting, but have generally been terminated by a reference to the mollahs. When they have been called, and their arguments been refuted, the greatest levity and indifference, or violent rage, has often been the only result. More promiscuous and larger assemblies have mingled extreme heedlessness with an inclination for the most vehement dispute. Once at Nookha they were violently thrust out of the town, and their lives so much endangered, that they were generally reported to have been murdered. The protection of government, however, and the impression still prevalent, though often studiously contradicted, that they are employed by the emperor, generally prevents forcible opposition, and procures them respect.

In the country, the missionaries have frequently found the common people simple and not unwilling to hear the truth; and their mollahs, though esteeming themselves learned, yet feeling that their knowledge is imperfect. Among them, especially among the mollahs, there are some in an inquiring state, and upon frequent intercourse with such, they found their hopes of success. A mollah at Shoosha and another at Bakoo are convinced of the truth of Christianity, and have in consequence suffered some persecution. The former having become sensible of the great evil of profaneness, once exhorted his brethren in the mosk against it, and proposed that they should make a resolution to reform. Some pledged themselves to abstain from the practice under a penalty of forfeiting a certain sum of money at every offence. A temporary reformation was the consequence; but it is to be lamented that they have long since forgotten their good resolutions. The one at Bakoo is considered in even a more hopeful state. But neither has yet had the boldness to make an open profession of Christianity, nor, if they desired it, would the brethren feel authorized to baptize them, as they do not give sufficient evidence of a change of heart.

Messrs. Dittrich and Haas, to whom was assigned the Armenian department, had a most delicate course to pursue. It was wholly without consultation with government that this branch of labour was added to the operations of the mission. The laws of



the empire were understood to forbid one denomination to make proselytes from another, and even to clothe the clergy of any tolerated Christian sect with power to prevent their flock from forsaking them, except to join the established Greek church. Education, however, is not considered by government as under the direction of the clergy, and any attempt on their part to control it is even regarded with jealousy. Yet wherever *religious* instruction is given they have a right to interfere. Here a small door was open, therefore, and yet so guarded was it by hindrances and difficulties as to be exceedingly strait. The use of the press, too, is not entirely prohibited; but, through the censorship, the control of all religious publications is thrown entirely into the hands of the clergy. Their course was, by all means, to steer clear of any collision with these government restrictions, and still make progress in usefulness.

In such circumstances, they determined, as vitally important, to direct all their labours, in enlightening and reforming the Armenians, to the simple point of bringing them to be coadjutors in the great work of converting the Mohammedans, and thus to place this department in the light of only a subordinate branch of the original and primary object of the mission. They aimed to enlighten the Armenian church without drawing away its members, and for this end intended to lay the fundamental doctrines of redemption by Jesus Christ, justification by faith alone, and sanctification by the Holy Ghost, simply and clearly before individuals as often as opportunity should present, but to forego all attempts at preaching or expounding in meetings, public or private, and to avoid controversy even in conversation. No intention was formed, however, to conceal fundamental truth, nor to refuse an answer to direct inquiries on controversial points. In regard to such topics, their usual course has been to refer to the declarations of the Bible, and let them form the answer and the argument. *Schools* and the *press* were expected to occupy their time, and to constitute the principal means of effecting the reformation at which they aimed. In them they hoped to find a field of usefulness sufficiently extensive and fruitful, without drawing upon themselves the opposition of the clergy, or the condemnation of the law. And if the ultimate result of the light they might thus communicate should be a determination of some no longer to adhere to the rites of the Armenian church, they trusted that Providence, by giving more liberality to



the laws or to the clergy, would prevent any fatal consequences to the mission.

Before noticing these two branches of their operations, permit me to say, that the brethren who have travelled among the moslems have not failed to do good as they have had opportunity to the Armenians also. It is a lamentable fact, that they have found but one native who gave them the least evidence of being pious, and him they saw but a short time. He was an old monk, who seemed to participate in their Christian feelings, and manifested for them the attachment of a brother. Downright infidelity, however, is not an enemy with which they have had to contend. It hardly exists among the Armenians in these parts. The great evil is a superstitious reliance upon the external observances of religion to the neglect of its vitality. The common people have almost no idea of spiritual religion, nor in fact of any doctrines, but such as tell them when and how to make the cross, to fast, feast, confess, commune, and the like; and the only practical effect of their religion, of course, is to cause the performance of such ceremonies. In this state their minds rest perfectly indifferent and spiritually dead. No spirit of inquiry has been found any where. Efforts to excite such a spirit, however, have not been in vain. The missionaries are indeed looked upon as chargeable with great heresies, and none the less so for being the followers of Luther and Calvin, who, probably through the influence of papal missionaries, are generally regarded as heresiarchs. But the Armenian church does not imitate the exclusiveness of Rome, in condemning as heirs of perdition, all who are without its pale; and its members are taught to regard other Christians as holding indeed to doctrines and rites inferior to theirs, but as members of the catholic church of Christ. Instead, therefore, of being turned away at once, the missionaries have found no difficulty in obtaining a hearing. They have been gratified also to find that, though the Armenian church receives as decidedly as any other the canons and traditions of the Fathers in addition to the word of God, as its standard of faith and practice, still the common sense of the community, when the question of paramount authority is started, always decides in favour of the Scriptures. They are considered and felt to be of binding authority, and an appeal to them in argument is generally final and satisfactory. Thus a firm support is found for appeals to the conscience; and the common people have often been seen to feel the



force of the plain preaching of the gospel, and to listen to it with interest. In some places, especially in Bakoo and Shámakhy, the most pleasing fruits have attended the dispensation of divine truth. In the former place a few, and in the latter twenty-five or thirty meet together privately for the reading of the Scriptures and attending to other means of grace, and have virtually separated from their church. With them the brethren correspond by letter, and also send them religious treatises in manuscript, which, not being subject to the censorship, can be more explicit in doctrine than if they were printed. Encouraging hopes are entertained that they will persevere unto the end; and information as late as August 4th, 1831, says "that many awakened souls in Shámakhy and Bakoo go on with firmness in the midst of the opposition they have to encounter."

When the missionaries first came to Shoosha, not a school existed in town, nor any but that of the old monk of St. Hagóp in the province. All attempts to establish a *female* school have, till the present time, been unsuccessful. No native female could be found capable in the least degree of acting as teacher, except an old nun. Proposals were made to her, but her usual employment of begging, being not only more congenial to her indolent habits, but in fact more lucrative than teaching, she absolutely refused. They then sought to teach a few girls in their own house, but such an indelible opprobrium would public opinion cast upon a girl who should thus frequent the house of a foreigner, that none would come. This prejudice is so strong, that to this day they are unable to obtain any native female servants for their families, and are obliged to procure help from the German colonies. The English families at Tebriz experience a similar difficulty, and the ladies there bring their maids from England.

The want of a *male* teacher was supplied by bringing one from the gymnasium at Moscow, and a school for boys was opened in the spring of 1827. So decidedly was he disqualified, however, for teaching, that it did not prosper until a vartabéd, named Bóghos, who had in the mean time opened a private school in the place, was called in as principal. He was not only a popular but a good teacher, and the number of scholars soon increased to 130. They were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and grammar, and, at the request of Bóghos, a few also studied rhetoric. The Psalter and other parts of the Scriptures were the reading lessons. But



Bóghos, after quarrelling away several assistants for insubordination, at length found himself also in the predicament of disobedience to his superiors, and was likewise obliged to leave. His original contract bound him to teach a religious catechism, and also every morning to read the Scriptures and explain them in the vulgar dialect. Of this part of his duty he was from the first extremely neglectful, and an intimation from the missionaries, at last, of the necessity of attending to it, only called forth from him a more positive refusal. Desirous as they were to retain so able a teacher, they felt that without at least this small amount of religious instruction they would no longer be authorized to support the school, and plainly told him their connection must be dissolved.

A school was then opened in their own house, which shortly increased to as many as their room would accommodate. A school-house was then erected for it within their premises, and that was also soon filled. Religion was now made more prominent, for the teacher was one of their converts, and the school was daily opened with prayer and reading the Scriptures, either by him or by one of the missionaries. It continued to flourish until near the time of our arrival, when its scholars amounted to sixty. We found also another school of about thirty scholars under their patronage. Only about two-thirds of the teacher's salary was contributed by them, the remainder being supplied by tuition fees. Besides the effects of these schools in giving knowledge to the young tending to produce enlightened views of religion, and of the prevailing superstitions, the missionaries have noticed with pleasure an increased desire of parents for the education of their offspring, and a distinct impression beginning to be made in favour of school books in the common dialect. The use of such books is one of the two improvements which they have been aiming to introduce. The other is the rejection of the old church books, which have hitherto been universally used. The Lancasterian system they have not attempted.

The great want of teachers which forced itself so distinctly upon their observation in their own experience, led them early to contemplate some method for supplying it. With this view, half of their new school-house has been fitted up for the accommodation of a seminary for the education of teachers. It is a favourite object, and one to which they intend their principal efforts in this department of education shall be directed. Mr. Haas, to whose



lot in their division of labour the business of education has fallen was expected, on his return from Moscow, where he was at the time of our visit, to open it in form. In the mean time, as an incipient step, some half a dozen young men had been already admitted to a private course of study, which some in fact had pursued so far as to be almost prepared to commence their profession. How they will be received, coming out as they do under missionary patronage, and being the first proper lay schoolmasters in the country, remains to be seen. But let their usefulness to others be what it may, they have themselves at least been benefited by the instructions of the missionaries. Two or three have been received into their families; where indeed no direct attempt has been made to lead them to fall out with their church, but they have attended family devotions, and heard much religious conversation; and though no satisfactory evidence of their being truly pious has been observed, they yet are in a promising state of mind, their views are generally scriptural, and their conduct has given the greatest satisfaction.

The most gratifying effects of the labours of the missionaries upon individual character have been observed in two deacons, of whom I must be allowed to give some account. They originally belonged to a convent on an island in the lake of Seván. But in search of theological knowledge they left that convent, and even had so strong a desire for the object of their pursuit, as to form the secret purpose of going to Venice, could they not obtain it nearer. Not finding it at Echmiádzin, where they spent some time, nor being admitted to the school at Tiflis, whither they subsequently went, one of them came to Shoosha, and engaged himself as assistant to Bóghos, while he was principal of the mission school, for the sole compensation of receiving his instructions. Being dismissed by him for some frivolous reason, it came to the knowledge of the missionaries that he was desirous of studying Latin and Greek, and they took him into their family. He subsequently assisted them in their school, and was the pious teacher already alluded to. His name was Moses. He was not long in mentioning his friend to them, and, at their request, he also soon joined them. The two deacons already understood their ancient tongue, and were, in the estimation of their countrymen, learned. But their thirst for additional knowledge was so great, that, notwithstanding the serious difficulties to be encountered from the total want of the requisite elementary works, their progress in Latin and Greek was



good, and one of them learned considerable English. The errors, too, were embraced in the circle of their studies, and though the errors of their church were never pointed out, they were not slow to detect them. The practice of praying for the dead was early brought forward by Moses, in an inquiry respecting its lawfulness. Mr. Dittrich chose to reply by merely pointing out some passages in the Bible, opposed to it. The deacon needed no more; he was already prepared to reject it. He soon, indeed, began to give pleasing evidence of a change of heart. His companion had not advanced so far; and for some time opposed, not forbearing to apply to him the epithet of heretic. He, too, at length became convinced; but the signs of his conversion, though such as to give encouraging hope, were never, owing perhaps to his natural temperament's being of a more intellectual make, so distinctly marked. Not having been converted in the school of controversy, both were more inclined, in conversing with their countrymen, to urge the great *duties* of repentance and faith, than to wrangle about points of speculative *doctrine*, however important. Thus their usefulness was great, and their enemies few. In fact, so mild and inoffensive was their deportment, that whatever they said was listened to, and such efficient coadjutors did they bid fair to become, that the missionaries contemplated sending them to some European seminary, for a more complete education than could be obtained at Shoosha. They never forsook the Armenian church, nor did they ever commune with the church of the mission.

The press was an original part of the missionary establishment, contemplated by the charter of Alexander. It has hitherto been furnished with only Armenian types. The superintendence of it, with the preparation of books, is Mr. Dittrich's particular department. The laws of the Russian censorship are understood to direct, that all religious works, before being printed, shall be inspected by the synod of St. Petersburg, or persons appointed by it, if in the Russian language; if in German, by the Lutheran consistory of the same city; if for the papists, by the papal archbishop also resident there; and if in Armenian, by the Armenian archbishop of the province. Of course archbishop Nérses, as wekeel of the Catholicos and president of the synod of Echmiádzin, had the inspection of the publications of this press. So long as he continued at Tiflis the necessary *imprimatur* could be easily obtained. With his approbation the following works were printed chiefly for schools, viz.



the Sermon on the Mount, as a first trial of the press; the first portion of the Psalms in syllables, intended as a sequel to the spelling-book; a short history of the Bible; a small grammar of the ancient Armenian; historical extracts from the Old Testament; and a large collection of Scripture passages, in both ancient and modern Armenian. Since his banishment, only a small dictionary of the ancient tongue, for schools, has passed through the censorship, and that so soon afterward, that the approbation was given in his name. The censorship is now exercised by the synod of Echmiádzin; but three works, viz. Vivian's Three Dialogues on the Way of Salvation, the Negro Servant, and an Original Treatise on Christianity and Mohammedanism, all in the vulgar tongue, have been sent to the press at Moscow, where the rector of the gymnasium both superintends the printing and performs the office of censor. An edition of the first arrived at Shoosha while we were there, and the last has since been finished. Agents have recently been sent abroad with them, and they are now extensively scattered throughout the trans-Caucasian provinces. None of their publications have met with any opposition; nor could they be opposed, bearing as they do the approbation of the censor upon their title page.

The most important work which Mr. Dittrich has attempted, and the one from which the most good is anticipated, is a translation of the New Testament into the vulgar dialect of the Armenians. The copies of the Scriptures possessed by the people when the missionaries first came to these provinces, were extremely few. They have increased their number by distributing about 700 of the ancient Armenian New Testament between the Koor and the Aras. But the small proportion of the people that can understand it in that dialect, necessarily sets very narrow limits to its circulation. In the vulgar dialect, the firmest belief is indulged, that it would be eagerly received by the common people. With the intention of making them so valuable a present, Mr. Dittrich undertook, with the aid of the deacon already mentioned, who was not engaged in teaching, to translate it. The first copy of the whole was completed, and the four gospels were revised for the press, when we were at Shoosha; and since then the revision of the remainder has been completed. The British and Foreign Bible Society had authorized an edition to be printed at its expense. But a *veto* from the censor arrested it. The Gospel of Matthew, on being prepared, was duly laid before the synod of Echmiádzin for its approbation. For several months

nothing was heard from it, and Mr. Zarembo, on his return from Turkey, made a visit to the convent to obtain a final answer. After considerable delay, the vartabéds reluctantly consented to call a meeting of the synod, at which he was present. Various objections were urged to its being printed. The work was declared to be so important, that a long time would be necessary to examine it and form their opinions. This difficulty he overruled. They promised to make a translation themselves. He replied, that they would not complete it in fifteen years; and "were they willing to be responsible for the souls, which, during that time, would be lost through ignorance of the word of God?" Then, with much violence of temper, they unanimously declared their unwillingness that the Scriptures should be printed in the vulgar tongue. Still, promises of acceding to his request, mingled with intrigue and tergiversation, were given and recalled, till, despairing of success, he left them in disgust. The Gospel of Matthew has finally been printed. But no hope is entertained of getting the *imprimatur* of the synod for the rest; and without this, it cannot, according to the decision of government, be printed in the empire. The operations of the press in every department, are, in fact, now entirely stopped by the inimical opposition of the censors. Thus is the Armenian hierarchy, by the aid of Russian laws, exercising, with the spirit and rigour of papacy, a power of which it would otherwise hardly have dreamed. For the anathemas already mentioned as having been uttered against the publications of Venice, only to be forgotten, are the only instances known of a formal attempt on the part of the Armenian clergy, to control the reading of their countrymen, or even the right of private opinion, until these laws at the same time suggested to them the idea, and clothed them with the necessary power.

Permit me now to give you an account of the storm of persecution which burst upon the mission not long before our arrival, and to which it was exposed during our visit. Nearly all the opposition which protestant missions in the Mediterranean have encountered, may be traced directly or indirectly to the adherents of the church of Rome. Unfortunately, a missionary can hardly set his foot upon any spot in that field, without encountering some sentinel of the "Mother of Harlots," ready to challenge him, and shout the alarm. Papists are the first Christians he meets; and before he has worked his way through them, to the Greeks, the Arme-





nians, or the Copts, for whose benefit specially he intends to labour, the chance is that they become so alarmed and prejudiced by papal misrepresentation, as to give him but a reluctant welcome. The missionaries at Shoosha had no obstacle of this kind to encounter. We know not that within the whole field of their labours, there is a papist nearer than Tiflis.\* Unexpectedly, however, the see of Echmiádzin was found ready enough, without instigation or advice, to act the part of the see of Rome.

The subject that first opened the eyes of the deacons to the errors of their church, was the first that brought them into collision with their countrymen. At a feast of sacrifice for the dead, made by a man who, as a pilgrim to Jerusalem, and a punctual observer of the laws of his church, was reputed very religious, they expressed a caution against relying upon masses for the dead, and some similar errors. Provoked that his good deeds should be called in question, he reported abroad that they had renounced praying for the dead, and the worship of saints and images; and a general opposition to them broke out. One morning, the principal Armenian of the place rose upon them in church, abused them with the most violent language, raised his cane over them, spat in their faces, and forbade them ever to appear there again. Things remained in this state, when the bishop came as usual to take up his winter residence in town. He immediately began to condemn them, and even wrote a letter of complaint to the missionaries. Their answer, and the winning meekness and simple piety of Moses, exhibited in a personal interview, calmed and overcame him. He became friendly; even put under the daily instruction of Moses, two of his own deacons; and the storm was allayed.

The calm, however, was but a prelude to a more violent tempest. A few weeks before our arrival, an Armenian who, through the instructions of the missionaries, had embraced the truth, came from Bakoo and was immediately carried, by his zeal, into the bazár, to converse with his countrymen. Much attention was excited, and though his manner was winning, and his theme was the great

\* The Jesuits once had a mission at Shámakhy. It was a branch of their mission at Isfahan, and was chartered by the Shah, at the solicitation of a Polish envoy, the protection of whose government it continued for some time to enjoy. The station was selected with particular reference to the European merchants who visited the place, many of whom were papists. The first missionary was assassinated in 1687. But the field was considered too important to be abandoned, and two others were appointed to his place. (Lett. Edit. et Cur. vol. 4, p. 44—53.) We neglected to inquire for any remains of this mission, but from the fact that we heard nothing of it, I infer that there are none.



doctrines of salvation, nearly all opposed. The storm, however, burst not upon him, as he was a stranger, but upon the deacons. On a subsequent Sabbath morning, a letter from the bishop was read in one of the churches, declaring "that he was ordered by the Catholicos to send the two deacons to Echmiádzin, and commanding them to be immediately bound and delivered to him." An appeal to the local authorities prevented the execution of this command at the time: but, it being repeated after a few days, the governor concluded to refer the whole case to the governor-general, and accordingly sent the deacons to Tiflis. We met them on their way, in company with two Cossacks, at Shah-boolák. Mr. Zarembo preceded them, in order to make the necessary explanation of their case. After reading a written statement of the proceedings of the missionaries; and listening to Mr. Zarembo's verbal explanations, the governor-general asked, with surprise, "How is it that you, being Germans, are interfering with the Armenians? Remain Germans yourselves, and let them remain Armenians." He declined at first to take cognizance of the case, saying, "The deacons are ecclesiastical men, they have committed an ecclesiastical offence, and must be judged by an ecclesiastical tribunal." But at length he concluded to lay it before the emperor, and to send them in the mean time to Echmiádzin, under the civil protection of the governor of Eriván. A petition to the emperor was accordingly written by them, and, together with the statement of the missionaries, was immediately forwarded. I ought to add, that though, as a plain man, and an executor of the Russian laws, the governor expressed himself abruptly, he was in reality very friendly to Mr. Zarembo. A similar testimony is given by the missionaries of the local authorities of these provinces generally. They have uniformly countenanced them, and manifested a disposition to facilitate their operations.

In the mean time a wekeel of the Catholicos arrived at Shoosha early in September, to withdraw the Armenians from the influence of the missionaries. Let us return thither and view his proceedings. Belonging to a distinguished family, holding the rank of high vartabéd, and clothed, on the present occasion, with the delegated authority of the Catholicos, he assumed a haughty carriage, and menaced the missionaries with threatenings of grievous import. His first blow at the mission was to drive an apprentice from the printing office, by accusing his brother-in-law and guardian, who



was a priest, of *Germanism*, and threatening to send him in chains to Echmiádzin. The school he attacked by publishing the names of all whose children had attended, and forbidding them, under penalty of excommunication, to send them again. The consequence was, that when the school, which had hitherto been closed on account of the cholera, was opened a few days afterward, only eight or nine, out of the former number of sixty, attended. The young men, too, who were preparing to be teachers, he forced, by threatening their fathers with excommunication, and by menaces directed to them personally, to cease their attendance at the mission-house.

Shall we look a moment at the instructions he was himself giving to his countrymen, while thus engaged in driving them from those of the missionaries? In a sermon preached the Sabbath after his arrival, in praise of the Virgin, who, as chief of the saints, was considered to be treated with special indignity by the protestant doctrines, he argued, that, "as Adam could not live without the woman, neither can Christ be mediator without Mary; she is the queen mentioned in the 45th Psalm; the most beautiful of women, whose charms are celebrated in the Song of Solomon; and as Christ did all that she required at the marriage in Cana, so will he now always regard her intercessions." "Who," said he in conclusion (bowing before her image as if to restore her lost honours), "who are these Germans, that have dared to speak against her? Cursed be they, and all who have to do with them! May the disease which now rages destroy them!" On another occasion, he was reported to assert, not only that Christ could not be mediator without Mary, but even to say that he would take upon himself to affirm, that she was equal to either of the persons in the Trinity!

The decision of the imperial government was waited for by the missionaries with anxiety. When it came, both of the deacons were already taken from their earthly trials; one having being carried off at Tiflis while the cholera was raging, and the other having died in the convent of Seván. In reference to them, however, after declaring that no evidence appeared of the missionaries' having attempted to proselyte, the decision laid down the important principle, that should a person be fully determined to leave the Armenian church, the clergy have no right to retain him by force, but shall leave him immediately to do what he pleases—a principle of religious liberty never before, it is believed, acknowledged in Russia, and entirely subversive of that prohibition of dissent, which denies



the right of every man to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. Of the schools, government distinctly declared its approbation; though it neither could nor would interfere to prevent the clergy from opposing schools established by men of another denomination. The missionaries, therefore, have no longer reason to apprehend the interference of government to the injury of their schools; and have only to contend, as best they can with the help of God, against the inimical moral power of the clergy. "Surely the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will."—In August of 1831, the mission had five schools, which were going on in tolerable quiet, and the opposition at Shoosha had grown weaker. But unfortunately the strength of the mission had seriously diminished. The departure of Mr. Zaremba, one of its oldest and most valued members, on account of sickness, has been previously mentioned. Mr. Hohenacker's feeble health has obliged him likewise to leave, and he has settled at Helenendorf. The mission now consists of Messrs. Dittrich, Haas, and Pfander, already named, of Mr. Yudt, a printer, and Mr. Sprömberg, a brother recently arrived.

The experiment which these brethren have made is exceedingly important. Let us gather some of the fruits of their experience. They have been led to doubt whether their original design of enlightening the Armenian nation without drawing away any from the Armenian communion, can be carried into complete execution. As the people become enlightened, they will of course wish for spiritual food, and for a rational and evangelical mode of worship; both of which must be sought elsewhere than in their own church. Some, also, will be the victims of persecution and excommunication. A mission church cannot refuse to open its arms to such as are thus excluded, by conscience, or by opposition, from their own. Still, so many barriers are set up by prejudice against foreign influence, that neither foreign missionaries alone, nor converts who have united with them, and thus come to be viewed as foreigners and apostates, can hardly expect to effect the entire reformation of the Armenian church. The work must be done by enlightened persons rising up from the midst of the church itself; and the greater the amount of light that is diffused through the nation before it is attempted, the more sure and complete will be the result.

The missionary, therefore, instead of aiming to make proselytes



to his own communion, although he may receive individuals who wish or are forced to come, should shape his measures so as to draw as few as possible. To this end he should avoid unnecessary controversy. By its ceremonial and unessential points are magnified into essentials in the estimation of the convert, and his conscience made so sensitive as to force him speedily from the communion of his church, while the clergy at the same time are irritated, and urged to search out and persecute or excommunicate all who are inclined to heresy. On general principles, too, it is inexpedient. For, instead of conveying important truth to the mind, it awakens prejudice to shut the door by immediate opposition, while by a contrary course, the seed might be widely scattered and become deeply rooted before the occurrence of such an event. The brethren confess, too, that stated and formal preaching to a regular congregation, although, did the laws of the country allow, their feelings would strongly urge them to attempt it as the most effectual mode of religious instruction, tends more than almost anything to bring opposition upon inquirers for the truth, and to draw a line of separation between them and their church.

You will expect us to suggest, in some part of our journey, what American Christians can do toward diffusing evangelical light in Russian Armenia. Our suggestions can be given nowhere more advantageously than here, in the light of the experiment of the Shoosha mission. In order to accomplish so desirable an object, no attempt, of course, should be made to transgress the laws of the land. Principles of expediency, of our society, and of religion, equally forbid it. And yet, it must be confessed, the door of entrance, if we would infringe upon none of them, is exceedingly strait. That an additional *printing press* could not be advantageously established, you hardly need that we should intimate, after what has been said of the press at Shoosha. So many difficulties would there be, also, in the way of sending *missionaries*, that we would not take upon ourselves at present to recommend it. Still, we are far from being ready to abandon, as inaccessible, so large a portion of the Armenian nation (embracing now the emigrant population of Persian Armenia, and of the northern part of Turkish Armenia,) as is assembled in the trans-Caucasian provinces of Russia. The door of entrance, though strait, is not entirely closed. Government has still left, and in a measure guaranteed to the German missionaries,



a very important sphere of usefulness, in allowing them <sup>such scope</sup> in the establishment and direction of *schools*. And we attribute to it the more importance, from a firm persuasion that the emperor looks upon their operations with pleasure, and that his inclinations would lead him to increase rather than diminish their privileges. Still, through want of funds, they are unable to cultivate the field that is thus open to them. Before our visit, their society, on account of the smallness of its income, had directed them by no means to enlarge their system of gratuitous instruction, which is the very thing that is needed in the present intellectual condition of the people. And the letter which communicated to us the decision of the emperor, said, "We fear our society is not able to carry into effect what is most needed—schools and printing." We would therefore strongly recommend to you to consider, if it be not expedient to extend to them a helping hand, by furnishing them with the means, in money and books, of putting into operation the extensive system of schools that is called for. You cannot need a word to convince you of the extreme desirableness, that so important a field so providentially opened, should be immediately occupied. Of the gentlemen whom you would thus make your agents, we happen, owing to changes that have occurred since we were there, to be acquainted with only one who is ordained. Respecting him, it gives us pleasure to testify that we have no expectation of your being able to send out from our own country a man of higher qualifications for judgment, learning, and piety.





## LETTER XII.

FROM SHOOSHA TO DATEV.

Dishonesty and falsehood of the Armenians and moslems—Route proposed—Leave Shoosha—Kúlaah-kishlák—Impressions respecting a republican government—Doctrines respecting the Virgin—Degh—Armenian nobility—Character of the Armenians for industry—Karahoonch—Passage of the river of Datev—Arrival at the convent of Datev—Diocese of Sünfk—Family devotions of the Armenians—Orders of the Armenian clergy—Moral character and influence of convents—Their influence upon education—Diocesan Bishops—Their income—Their influence—Decline of monasticism.

DEAR SIR,

WERE we to record all the vexations and disappointments to which we are subjected in our journey, by the total want of truth that universally prevailed, almost every page of our journals would be disfigured by some complaint. As faithful describers of the character of the people, however, we are bound to report enough to shew you, that lying is so common, as almost to form a part of their nature. So blinded even is their conscience, as not to be easily persuaded to regard it as a sin, especially when no evil to others is the designed object of it. Mutual confidence, of course, hardly exists; and only by being experimentally acquainted with all the varied modes of deceiving, are they able to regulate their dealings with each other. This total disregard of truth, threw indescribable obstacles in the way of our obtaining correct information; and the difficulty evidently increased as we advanced eastward. In answer to the most common questions, we were many and many a time told what was palpably false, for no other imaginable reason, than either the depraved taste of our informants for falsehood, or a dislike to trouble themselves with the accuracy of truth. And never could we confide in what was said to us, without confirming it by cross-questioning, or by otherwise finding a balance of probabilities in its favour.

The difficulty was not less in our dealings with the people, than in our inquiries of them. Deeming it imprudent, on account of my feeble health, to leave Shoosha with no other attendant than Antonio, whom we had taken to help us in the languages of the country, rather than to serve us, we endeavoured to procure another



for a travelling servant and cook. Four were engaged successively by solemn contract, all of whom disappointed us; some never making their appearance at all after the bargain was completed, and others deserting us after two or three days' service. Our difficulty with muleteers was scarcely less; we continued to hire different sets of them in vain, until the pledge of contract was finally given, and insured our departure. The custom of the pledge is universal wherever I have travelled in Syria, Greece, and Armenia. No matter how small it be, nor which of the contracting parties gives it, it binds the bargain, which, otherwise, though made with the most solemn promises, might be broken for the merest trifle. I have known its validity fail but once, and then the poor muleteer's horses were seized by government, and he restored our pledge. Both moslems and Armenians are sufficiently given to falsehood, but the latter more so than the former. I must add, too, that the kindred vice of profaneness, in all its varieties, is equally common to both sects. It is heard from every mouth, and so lightly is it regarded, as not to be esteemed sinful.

It was on the 1st of November that we found ourselves in readiness to bid farewell to our hospitable and beloved brethren at Shoosha. The cholera had ceased in the valley of the Aras; and though the plague still continued at Tebriz, where it had broken out to finish the desolation commenced by the cholera, we determined to move in that direction. My own health, too, was not restored beyond a liability to constant relapses, but we hoped that travelling would confirm it. The usual caravan route to Tebriz passes a little to the east of Shoosha, and takes nearly a straight course. But our intention being to visit Echmiádzin on our way, we took a more untravelled road, directly over the mountains of Kara-bagh to Nakhcheván, anticipating that the difficulties of the way would be more than compensated by the opportunity it would present of seeing the Armenians in a more primitive and simple state than they are perhaps elsewhere to be found. In order to facilitate our progress, our former friend, the commandant of Kars, who had now succeeded to the command of Shoosha, repeated his civilities, by offering us an order for the villages on the road to furnish us with lodgings and guides.

With an awkward hostler, whom we had taken as a final resort, for a servant and cook, and mounted on five horses owned by two Persian muleteers, we started at 10 A.M. Our course lay directly



over the mountains, which rose behind, and towered far above our mountain citadel, and had for several weeks been the resting place of dark clouds, that to our impatient eye threatened daily to cover them with impassable snow-drifts. We issued from the Eriván gate, and descending awhile, came upon the top of the ridge which connects, in this direction, the base of the rock of Shoosha with the mountain. We were still so elevated, that the objects at the bottom of the ravines on either side, could be but indistinctly seen, and the steepness of the declivity along which we descended into that on the left, put the carefulness of our horses to a severe test. We finished the descent without accident, and then, following a path little better than a goat's track, over sloping rocks and along the edge of chasms, we traced the torrent that washes the bed of the ravine, to the very top of the mountain.

Though we had yet found no road more difficult, we enjoyed it much. Our spirits, cheered by feelings of returning health and freedom to move again after so long a confinement, and by the providential deliverance we had experienced from the pestilence by which a thousand had fallen at our side, and ten thousand at our right hand, were additionally exhilarated by a smiling November's sun, which, shining through a cloudless sky, warmed without oppressing us. How charming, too, was the crystal stream that murmured by us, after the briny wells of Shoosha! We felt as if we could swallow enough to quench an elephant's thirst, merely for the pleasure of drinking. The party-coloured leaves, too, silently dropping from the oak, maple, beech, hawthorn, and other trees, which covered the sides of the mountain, and partly shaded our path, threw over our feelings a tinge of pleasing melancholy. And nothing interrupted the general stillness, but the sudden start of a lizard among the leaves, or the bark of a dog of some straggling nomad, who, with tardy steps, was edging his way to join his companions already in their winter-quarters on the banks of the Koor. The height of the mountain may be estimated from the fact, that it divides the waters of the Koor from those of the Aras. We found the topmost ridge entirely destitute of trees, as if even they had retired before the winds and snows that in winter make it their sporting place; and the green sward that covered it, seemed only to add to its bleakness. We descended immediately, on the farther side, into a ravine as steep and profound as the one we had ascended, but destitute of rocks and precipices. Crossing a torrent at its



bottom, and ascending, a fatiguing distance, the steep declivity of a mountain on its left side, we stopped at Kúlaah-kishlák, (called also Kúlaah-déresy), the first village on the road. Its estimated distance from Shoosha is only 4 *fúrsakhs*\*; but we were at least seven hours on the road.

Without a sight of the commandant's order, the kakhia readily received us as his guests. A kind of public room was opened, and after it was cleared of some dishes used for the entertainment of poultry in the absence of travellers, and spread with carpets, we found in it comfortable accommodations. A supper of rice revived me, and I was encouraged at finding myself not too fatigued by my first day's ride for a little conversation with our host. The village contained about 50 underground houses, all inhabited by Armenians, who had one church and two priests. It was the limit of the extent, in this direction, of the diocese of Kántसार. The kakhia affirmed that no schools existed either here or in any of the surrounding villages; and declared, as a reason, that no one was qualified to teach, and probably none wished to learn. His own manifest indifference to the subject, tended to confirm the latter assertion. He estimated the number in this village who could read, at only six.

Our inquisitiveness respecting his village and nation, led him to take a similar liberty to question us respecting our country. A conversation ensued resembling many that occurred during our journey, and will afford you a fair specimen of the ideas suggested to the more sensible of the common people in this part of the world, on first hearing of a republican government. Learning that we were from the *Yengy Dúnya* (new world), and acknowledged subjection to no European government, he inquired if we had a king of our own. Our reply led him to ask us, with the evident impression that it would be a great privilege, and give us respectability, if we *could* not have one. We assured him that we could, but that not one among us wished it, and were a man to declare himself king, he would inevitably be killed. He demanded, with astonishment, the reason. Because, said we, we prefer the liberty and privilege of governing ourselves, to the splendour, expense, and

\* Though not yet in Persia, we must now adopt the Persian measure of distance, it being here the prevalent one. It is the ancient *parasang*, still called in Persian *fúrsakh*, but in Turkish *agháj*, or tree. The latter name is most known where we travelled, but I prefer the former for its classical associations. It is not a measured distance, but varies little from four miles.



tyranny of kings ; for now, according to the fundamental principle of our government, every citizen has a voice in the choice of officers, the laying of taxes, and the enacting of laws. After reflecting a moment, he concluded that there could be no *barakét* (prosperity) under such a government ; and upon our declaring that our experience contradicted his opinion, and asking his reasons, he added, that there could be no public security, people must fall to robbing and killing each other. No way desirous to diminish his happiness by persuading him that our government was better than his own, and in compliance with our unvarying principle to say nothing against the powers that be, we conceded that from what he knew of mankind his conclusion was natural and just ; for such would inevitably be the result, were the people around him to have a government like ours. He must remember, however, we suggested, that we are a different people ; that instead of being ignorant and demoralized, a large proportion of our countrymen are educated under the influence of moral principle, and possessed of integrity.

Observing an Armenian Testament among our baggage, he began to read it, and found some difficulty in ascertaining what it was. It was evidently new to him, he had never read it, and no one in the village, he assured us, except the priests, owned a copy. He seemed to care little about it, however, and it only gave him occasion to ask if our church was nearly related to his in doctrine. We chose to answer in detail ; that both believe in the Trinity, and in the incarnation and death of Christ to save the world ; in a word, that both are founded upon the New Testament, and “ can they fail of being nearly related ? ” He replied, that lately some Germans had come among them professing to have the same religion, but they denied the perpetual virginity of the mother of God, the mediation of the saints, &c., and thus proved that their faith was essentially different. We would gladly have seized the occasion to remove his prejudices, which were evidently strong against our missionary brethren, but the fatigue of the day, and the previous conversation, had left us too little nerve for argument. Antonio, however, whose eyes had been opened at Shoosha to many of the errors of his church, continued the conversation respecting the mediation of the virgin ; and finally concluded by pledging himself to believe in it, if proof could be adduced that her body as well as her soul ascended to heaven.

The veneration of the Armenians for the virgin is not less than



that of the Greeks; and being of necessity frequently alluded to in our journals, as one of their most prominent superstitions, it demands a moment's attention. The extent to which she is regarded as an *object of worship* and an *intercessor with God*, is sufficiently plain from the extracts already made from the Jamakirk in speaking of the nature of the Armenian church services. Her *perpetual virginity* is held to with an almost inconceivable strictness as an essential article of belief, and is dwelt upon with indecent minuteness. Expressions occur in the creed already quoted from the prayer-book, which a sense of decency would not allow to be published. Others still worse are found in the daily prayers of the church, to which no delicate ear would allow itself to listen. The title, *Mother of God* (in Armenian *Asdvadzadzin*, literally parent of God), as applied to her, has been already frequently repeated. Her *freedom from original sin*, which is believed by both the Greeks and the papists, is not, we were assured by the vartabéds at Echmiádzin, an article of the Armenian faith; and I find it asserted by Nerses Shnorháli, "that the Virgin Mary, from whom Christ took his body, was of the sinful nature of Adam."\* Very inconsistently, however, the Armenians celebrate the festival of her conception, which originated in the idea of the native purity of her nature. That a sufficiently high opinion is entertained of her holiness after her conception of our Lord, will appear from the same author. "It would be agreeable," he says, "to my ideas, if I might venture to say, that these passions, as well as all diseased operations of mind and body, were foreign, not only from that body which was united to the Word, but also from that of the holy virgin after the indescribable conception. For the place where God literally takes up his residence obeys not the laws of nature any more than did the burning bush or the fiery furnace. We who are in the truth must believe, that, after the virgin became the residence of the Spirit and the Word, human passions were entirely removed from her."† Blasphemous as was the assertion of the vartabéd at Shoosha respecting her equality with the persons of the Trinity, he was almost borne out in it by the ideas of his countrymen. Even the Jamakirk calls her "the mediator of the world, seraph of dust, more famous than the cherubim." And it is common to eulogize her by referring to the almighty word that called the light into existence, and saying, as

\* Unthanragán, p. 84, 204.

† Ibid. p. 212, 213.



God said "Let there be light, and there was light," so she said to Gabriel, Be it unto me according to thy word, and his words came to pass. The assumption of her body to heaven is firmly believed, and the event, as in the papal church, is celebrated by a festival.

*Nov. 2.* Refreshed by sleep and a light breakfast, we started at 7 and a quarter A.M. Cultivation, principally of grain, of which we saw none yesterday till we approached the village, was limited also on this side to its vicinity. For a great rarity in this part of the world, where houses for the sake of mutual protection are universally clustered closely together in villages, every farm had its farm-house, as if each proprietor could live quietly under his own vine and fig-tree. Barns, however, were wanting, and the haystacks which supplied their place were raised, either on scaffolds or on the limbs of trees, some six or eight feet from the ground, probably to be above the reach both of cattle and the snow. As we advanced, the ravine below us became a chasm of frightful depth, confined between perpendicular precipices. Our road led us up and down long declivities fearfully steep, and passed alternately through groves and pasturage grounds, till we came at length to an open prospect in front of the heart of the mountainous part of Kara-bagh. It is an extensive table-land, separated from the valley of the Koor by the mountains we had crossed, and from the valley of the Aras by another range, now in sight and white with snow. Unlike both these mountains, it is entirely destitute of trees. In the bottom of a deep valley that separated us from it, we reached, at 11 and a half A.M., a beautifully transparent river running to the left toward the Aras. Its size induced us to avail ourselves of a log bridge at hand, but finding it impossible to pass a large rock on the farther side, we returned and forded it without difficulty. On the sunny sides of this warm valley were a few vineyards, the only ones that met our eye between Shoosha and Nakhcheván. Ascending by the bed of one of the ravines that intersected the table-land before us, we reached, at 2 and a quarter P.M., the Armenian village of Degh, 4 fúrsakhs from Kúlaah-kishlák.

Inquiring as usual for the kakhia to furnish us with lodgings, we were conducted to the house of a melik. By the side of the others, which were all under-ground cabins, it seemed a large and venerable building. The upper story, built of wood with a shingled roof, was indeed in ruins, but the lower part was solidly con-



structed of stone. Besides an arched portico in front, it consisted of two large apartments, each of which was covered with a lofty dome, and had no window to admit the light, nor chimney to let out the smoke, except a round aperture at the top. Directly beneath it, in the centre of the room, the place for a fire was indicated only by a circle of hewn stone on a level with the rest of the floor which was likewise of stone.

The only furniture of these prison-like apartments was a few piles of carpets, mattresses, coverlets, and cushions. Carpets were immediately spread around the hearth, and a fire, which the coldness of the weather rendered necessary, was built for our accommodation. Unfortunately a clownish Russian soldier, by obstinately appropriating to himself a large share of the circle around it, and the smoke which would not find its way to the outlet above till the air was sufficiently heated to force it upward, combined to ruffle Antonio's temper so much, that, not content with falling out with the soldier, he undertook, also, to let loose his tongue upon ourselves. A warm fire and clear air soon set matters right, however, and the melik in the mean time, who was absent on our arrival, returned to welcome his guests. The parade made to receive him, and the feudal homage paid him by the villagers, reminded me of the state affected by the Emeers of Mount Lebanon. But his equipage was a caricature of all hereditary nobility. He had but one or two attendants, and rode upon an ass. We had already ordered a supper of piláv from our own rice, which was now brought in with the addition of a boiled fowl or two from his stock, and he sat down to help himself, with all his guests, including the soldier, leaving us in the awkward predicament of not knowing whether he was entertaining us or we them. Neither spoon, nor knife, nor fork appeared, and each tore his fowl in pieces with his fingers, and laded up his piláv with his hands. Our host manifested little inclination to converse with us, and when we thought to lead him to it by telling him from whence we came, a question which he had neglected to ask, a few answers satisfied all the curiosity that was excited.

*Melik* is a word borrowed from the Arabic, in which language it means a king, but in Armenian it is only equivalent to noble. The ancient Armenian nobility, which was once so proud and powerful, is now almost extinct. With the exception of a family pretending to be descended from the Ardzroonies, and another from the Ma-





migonians, but bearing another name, at Tiflis, we heard of no nobility claiming to belong to the ancient stock, out of the mountains of Kara-bagh. These mountains were formerly embraced in the province of Sünik, which was inhabited by one of the most ancient, proudest, and most powerful of the Armenian clans, called Sünik, and also Şisagán. Its princes enjoyed for many centuries little less than independence, till finally one of them helped to destroy the dynasty of the Pakradians, by aspiring himself to the throne.\* Even so late as the early part of the eighteenth century, during the Afghan invasion of Persia, a prince pretending to descend from the ancient Sünik blood, succeeded in these mountains in throwing off the Persian yoke, and contending successfully for several years with his enemies.† The Armenians here have now, with less of civilization, more independence of character, than in any other part of their country; and their nobles, though poor, are considerably numerous. The title seems to descend to all the male children.

*Nov. 3.* Taking a guide from the melik for the convent of Datev, which, though not on the direct road, we determined to visit, we started at 7 and a quarter A.M. Our route lay across the table-land upon which we entered yesterday. Its waving surface was arable, and cultivated with grain throughout, in long narrow fields, without a fence to separate them. And, some being green with the crop already above the ground, others sowed and dry, and others still newly ploughed, or now undergoing that operation, they presented a landscape of a singular aspect. The apparent fertility of the soil led us to doubt the statements of our host at Degh respecting its productiveness; but they were confirmed by our guide. A view of the many circular threshing floors for treading out grain, which crowned every little eminence around, and were almost as numerous as the houses, had induced us in the evening to express to the melik our surprise at the quantity of grain that seemed to be cultivated by his village. His reply is a specimen of the unmeaning language of piety, which, in this part of the world, is in the mouth of every body, and seems a genuine characteristic of orientalism. "We sow," said he, "a considerable quantity, but reap only what God gives us. In other parts, the farmers, by irrigating their lands, increase the natural productiveness of the soil; but the location of ours not admitting of this, we depend only upon the

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 207.

† Chamcheán, p. 1, c. 25.



rain of heaven, and what they produce, therefore, is entirely the gift of God." To more minute inquiries he replied, that their crops varied from one to five fold; four fold being the average of a good crop.

The ploughmen whom we passed were cheering their labours with songs, as they drove their ploughs after teams of four pair of oxen, with a boy riding upon one of the leaders to direct their course. In the winter ten, and in the summer eight pair of oxen are usually attached to each plough. Respecting the industry of the Armenians generally, I may take this opportunity to say, that if they cannot be called an indolent people, Asiatic want of energy prevails in all. The merchants are business men, and in some degree enterprising, but still find much time to indulge their ease. Mechanics and peasants do the work that devolves upon them, but with hardly force enough to clear them from the charge of laziness, and with none of the activity of mind that leads to improvements and inventions. With them it is most true, that there is no new thing under the sun; the way their fathers have trod, is that only which they deem it possible for them to pursue.

The numerous ravines that intersect the table-land over which we were passing, were of great depth, and though their precipitous stratified banks were of a consistency and appearance that left the distant observer doubtful whether they were clay or rock, they seemed to be gullies worn away by violent rains. Their sides and beds bristled with numerous slender cones some twenty feet high or more, each capped with a rock occasionally several tons in weight. The rocks had probably caused the curious formation, by defending the soil directly beneath them from the rains which had washed away the earth around. We at length descended, or almost slid, so steep was the declivity, to the bottom of one of them, and there found a beautiful swollen river of the purest water. Then turning an angle, we suddenly came upon the village of Karahoonch. It was a small cluster of Armenian houses in a little nook, encircled high above on the north by an impending precipice. From the farther angle a cascade poured down its silvery riband of water for the accommodation of the inhabitants; while enormous masses of rock, detached in former times, threatened, in no unintelligible terms, their very existence. Here our road seemed to end, and for awhile we knew not but it would end for the day. For it appeared that our guide had received orders to conduct us by this route,



instead of the direct one of Kūrós, on account of the cholera which was said still to exist there, and he knew the way no farther. Another was soon procured; but how were we to find an egress in the direction of Datev? The villagers pointed us to the top of the precipice. We told them it was impossible. They laughed at us, and our guide, tucking the border of his gown in his girdle, led the way with the agility of a mountain goat. A serpentine path conducted us directly to the top, where a break in the ledge, unseen from below, opened again upon the elevated plain.

Hastening across it, we found ourselves, after some distance, on the brink of the awful chasm through which flows the river of Datev, forming one of the wildest and most sublime of nature's scenes. Its depth from where we stood was at least 800 feet, though its narrowness prevented us from seeing the bottom. Its banks were the rugged and torn sides of precipitous mountains. The projecting perpendicular buttresses of the one opposite to us, were alternated with slightly sloping recesses, covered with sufficient soil to support a growth of forest trees, but which with its silvan load, had in several places slid far down from its original bed. On one of these dislocated patches appeared a small stone convent, which is affirmed by history, we were assured at Datev, to have migrated, uninjured, along with its foundation. Though so notable a miracle confirmed its sanctity, it seems to have frightened away all the monks, for it is now uninhabited.

This chasm we were to cross by descending to its very bottom, and ascending the opposite side. The commencement of our task was appalling. A sideling path conducted us for nearly a hundred yards down the smooth surface of a rock, covered slightly with loose pebbles, and inclined at an angle that caused our horses to slide much of the way, directly toward the edge of a precipice which formed the lower part of the bank below us. We trusted to the sure feet of our horses rather than our own, and got safely over it. Then winding around the base of a basaltic precipice, through a grove of stunted oaks, strown with immense rocks long since detached from the ledge above, we came in sight of the convent we were seeking. It stood upon the very brink of the opposite bank, at a height perhaps even above us. From beside it, a silvery cascade bounded from rock to rock into the abyss below. In a sunny nook at the bottom appeared a little convent, with its fruit garden for the luxury of the parent one above. And contrasted with it,



just in the back ground, rose up a lofty mountain, now almost hidden from our view in a dreary snow-squall, which occasionally scattered a few flakes upon us as an earnest of to-morrow.

The remainder of our descent, through bushes and over rocks, was still steep and hazardous, and to me not a little fatiguing. At the bottom, where we expected to ford a stream that had been murmuring in our ears, to our surprise none was to be found. It was hid from our view by a natural bridge, sixty or a hundred feet above it, apparently formed by some mighty convulsion which had dislocated huge masses of rock from the mountains above, and choked up the chasm. Our situation on its top afforded no interesting view of it, and we amused ourselves at our Mohammedan muleteers, whose disappointment at finding no river, heightened into vexation by thirst, was increased to absolute rage by finding some twenty or thirty hogs (the abomination of a moslem), wallowing in the only accessible puddle, and grunting at them as they approached to drink. Had not the ceremonial and physical pollution of the swine, however, prevented them from tasting, it would have been found unpalatable, for it came from a warm mineral spring that issued from the top of the bridge. The only ascent from it was through a passage, scooped for two or three rods out of the perpendicular face of a solid rock, and so narrow and low, that one of our loaded animals fell, and all were in the most imminent danger of being precipitated over the low balustrade to the very bottom of the ravine below. The remainder of the ascent, though steep and difficult for the poor animals, rather refreshed than fatigued us. We reached the convent of Datev at sunset, having rode 3 fursakhs from Karahoonch, and 6 from Degh.

We announced ourselves to two or three monks who were standing in the court of the convent, as American missionaries or preachers; and a bishop soon came out to meet us with a welcome and his blessing, and conducted us to his room. A warm fire cheered, and an excellent cup of tea refreshed us, and it was immediately evident that no pains would be spared to make our visit agreeable. With a liberality hardly to be expected in a convent upon a fast day, two fowls were speedily prepared for our supper.

The bishop of Datev had died a few days before, but our host, his chorepiscopus who was acting in his place, gave us with readiness the information we wished. The see is named, from the ancient province in which it is situated, the see of Sünik, and it was



here that bishop Stephen, whose history of the Orpélians forms the foundation of Saint-Martin's learned Memoirs upon Armenia, exercised his functions. In the neighbouring village, to which the convent has given its own name of Datev, there is still a family of meliks of that ancient race, descended probably from Eligoom the Orpelian, who, in the latter part of the twelfth century, received in this region such large estates from the Atabeg of Aderbaiján.\* The diocese of Sünik now, according to our informant, besides dividing with that of Kántसार, the province of Kara-bagh, embraces the province of Nakhcheván, and even extends across the Aras. It once contained 796 villages, but their number has been reduced by transportation to Persia, voluntary emigration to Turkey, and oppression at home, to 74, which are served by only 62 priests. There is no school in the whole diocese, except that some 20 lads from the neighbouring villages are taught in this convent. The convent itself contains two bishops, ten vartabéds, and two deacons.

To our surprise, the bishop not only knew the name of America, but repeated at some length, and with tolerable accuracy, the history of its discovery. He had read it some time before at Tiflis, probably from Robertson's History of America, which has been printed in Armenian. Like most others in the east who have inquired of me respecting America, he was more curious to be informed of the language, religion, and character of the aborigines, than respecting ourselves. But he failed not to ask whether we all bore the name of Christians; and thus betrayed an almost equal ignorance of our present condition with the lowest peasants. The inquiry was followed by numerous questions respecting our religious state, such as, whether we had churches, priests, &c. He seemed somewhat staggered to learn that we had no convents; and when we assured him that bishops among us are married, he was amazed, but, with the consenting voice of the whole circle of monks, pronounced the custom a good one. On learning that we had several thousand ministers of the gospel, and a still greater number of churches, they all stared with astonishment, and required no more to convince them of our Christianity or orthodoxy.

The name of the missionaries at Shoosha being mentioned, he was disposed to laugh at the idea of attempting to convert moslems. Not one, he said, after so many years of labour, had been con-

\* St. Mart. vol. 2, p. 103.



verted; and indeed the extreme bigotry of Mohammedanism rendered the thing impossible. The same opinion, we told him, once prevailed in our own country, respecting the conversion of the aborigines, but experiment had proved its incorrectness. Instances had occurred, also, of missionary efforts remaining fruitless for fifteen or twenty years, and then being crowned with complete success. But the Germans, we continued, are foreigners; you Armenians are the proper persons to undertake the work, as your constant intercourse with them, and your rights and privileges as citizens of Russia, give you great advantages. Rights and privileges! he replied; I will tell you what rights and privileges we have. When the Russians took the country, they gave to the Armenians many deserted moslem villages, where they consequently settled and built churches. But the moment their former occupants return from Persia, the Armenians are obliged to yield their claims and retire. In short, we have abundant evidence that the Russian laws give us no advantage over the moslems. We inquired if they had ever employed missionaries or their vartabéds to convert them. No, he replied, and if we attempted it what should we preach to them? They believe in God now, and have good prayers. We could only preach to them the Trinity and the divinity of Christ. We reminded him that Christianity differs in many other very important points from Mohammedanism. How superior, for example, is the heaven of the Bible to that of the Korán. His answer was, "Why, as to that, I will tell you what a vartabéd once said to a moslem." "If I were sure that your paradise is a reality, I should wish to be there!" Shocked at such levity in a Christian bishop, and perceiving that we had by accident touched the wrong string for a convent, we were silent. We would gladly have continued the subject of missions, however, especially as it might now lead us to speak of many important doctrines, but the fatigue of the day, and the lateness of the hour obliged us to desist. Lodgings were assigned us where we had been sitting, and four of us, including the bishop, stretched ourselves upon the carpet to sleep, in a space hardly large enough to contain us.

*Nov. 4.* The bishop rose before light, at the sound of the convent bell, to attend the morning devotions of the church; but in his room neither in the evening nor in the morning was there any acknowledgment of divine providence, except in the asking of a blessing upon our food. That duty he seemed to consider as de-



volving of course upon him. It was done while he was looking around upon the company, and with so little reverence, that my companion knew not what he was doing till he had half finished. My own experience in convent devotions, prepared me to expect it, as a customary civility to strangers, and prevented me from being surprised, though not from being shocked, at such gross indecorum. As I have often witnessed elsewhere in similar circumstances, he wished us a good appetite at the close, without a pause or a change of tone, as if it formed the concluding sentence of his prayer. Family prayer, as practised by us, is believed to be unknown among the Armenians; and the same, it is feared, may be said also of private devotions. Not uncommonly, however, in these parts, one or more members of a family repeat, either individually or in concert, before lying down at night, so much as they can recollect of the long prayer of Nerses Shnorháli, which forms a part of the ninth service of the church. It is in fact the usual substitute for the whole of that service. If ignorance or disinclination prevent this formal attempt at prayer, a simple sign of the cross in the name of the Trinity, is the only act of devotion with which they commit themselves to the slumbers of the night. The same superstitious ceremony is believed, also, to be their only mode of asking a blessing and returning thanks at table, unless an ecclesiastic is present to go through the mockery just described.

We delayed an hour or two in the morning to examine the convent. The cells of the monks, store rooms, and stables, composing buildings of different ages and forms, surround a square courtyard, in which stands the church, the pride of the establishment. The traditions of the nation assert, that the convent was founded by St. Eustathius, one of the seventy disciples who accompanied the apostle Thaddeus into Armenia, and derived from him its name of Datev, or Sdatev.\* And the bishop this morning shewed us a stone in the outer wall of the church with the number 58 upon it, as proof of its claim to that early origin. Still he did not attribute to the present church any greater age than 944 years; and allowed that it is not the oldest of the buildings now standing. It is in the style of architecture already described at Tiflis; its walls of hewn stone are of extreme solidity and thickness; and its arches and domes, and its proportions throughout, are grand, and in good taste. Subsequent observation confirmed the assertion of the

\* Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 8.



bishop, that its architecture is better than that of the church of Echmiádzin, and, in fact, we found it surpassed by no building in the country. It was almost destitute of the usual ornaments, having been plundered by the Persians in the last war; and several parts of its walls shewed on the inner side marks of fires, built by the same invaders to deface or profane it. The monks were upon that occasion treated with great indignities; and the bishop just dead, after suffering many tortures, was carried captive to Tebriz. We inquired until we were weary for the library, and though repeatedly promised that it should be shewed to us, we finally left without a sight of it.

Permit me to avail myself of this advantageous position to give you an account of the Armenian convents in general. A brief statement of the different orders of their inmates may serve as an introduction. In the Armenian clerical orders below the deacons, there are *four grades*, the occupants of which are named respectively, *porters, readers, adjurers or exorcists, and candle-holders*. All, however, are frequently embraced in the generic name of *clerk*, or in the common language *diratsoo*, which means, one designed for the priesthood, a candidate. Invert their order, and they exactly correspond with the *ordines minores* of the papal church, which are *acolythi, exorcistae, lectores, and ostiarii*. The duty of each respectively, is, to open the doors of the church, and prepare it for divine worship, to chant parts of the church service, to prepare the font for baptism, and to light and extinguish the candles. In other words, they act the part of the *anagnostes* in the Greek, and of the *clerk* in the English church. A bishop only can confer upon them their office, and he does it by prayer and the laying on of hands. But no vow of celibacy is connected with the ceremony, marriage either before or after it being subject only to the same rules as that of laymen; and every one is at liberty to throw off the ecclesiastical character he thus acquires, and to return to the world as if he had never had any duties in the church. These duties indeed are frequently performed in parishes by whomsoever the priests chance to invite, without their being previously consecrated; and generally, in fact, as we have already seen, they devolve upon boys. Persons occupying these grades are found in all convents, and are boys sent thither to be instructed and brought up. They cannot, of course, be considered monks or permanent residents; though many of them ultimately take the vow of chastity.





The *fifth* and *sixth* grades are those of the *sub-deacon* and *deacon*. The duties of the former are, to dress the priest for mass, and to serve the deacon in his various duties. Candidates for the deaconship usually remain, however, so short a time in this grade, that it has virtually become almost extinct. The duties of the deacon, are, to serve the priest at the mass, by bringing to him the cup and wafer to be consecrated, by reading the Gospel, &c. This grade, too, is little known except in convents and cities. In country parishes candidates usually pass immediately on to the priesthood. Both can be conferred only by the laying on of the hands of the bishop and prayer. No one can marry after entering the first, nor can he go back to the rank of layman. All sub-deacons and deacons in convents, therefore, are to be classed among their regular and permanent inhabitants. In nunneries an order of deaconesses, likewise, is said to be known, who read prayers for the inmates of those establishments. No other deaconesses are found in the church.

The *seventh* grade is that of *priest*; preparatory to which, the six preceding must have been passed through, though the time of remaining in them is not fixed, and all may be, and often are, passed in a day. The *parish priests* will be spoken of elsewhere. Only those who are unmarried on entering the grade of sub-deacon, and of course become by that act bound to a life of celibacy, come within the scope of my present object. They constitute the *monastic priesthood*, and are always connected with convents. Their distinctive name is *vartabéd*; though that title is vulgarly applied also to all the inhabitants of convents who wear the conical hood, whether in priest's or bishop's orders. It signifies a *doctor* or *teacher*, and is indicative of their peculiar business. For they, in distinction from the parish clergy, are the *preachers* of the church. That duty, however, devolves principally upon the highest of the three grades into which they are subdivided. The lowest are merely unmarried priests; and though honoured with the title of *vartabéd*, are never called to the important duties which it implies.

The *eighth* grade is that of *bishop*. Those who are admitted to it are always selected from the *vartabéd*s, and are of course invariably unmarried. Their special duty is to ordain the seven grades below them, they being themselves ordained only by the *Catholikos*. They are subdivided into many different ranks of honour and office, among which are the *chorepiscopi*, who act as aids and col-



leagues to diocesan bishops, archbishops, a name applied to almost all who have dioceses, and patriarchs, who are clothed with authority by the civil government over a large extent of country. Many common bishops besides are to be found, who have no dioceses, and were ordained with no prospect of any, but discharge merely the duties of common monks. All, of whatever rank, reside in convents, and are to be classed among their inhabitants.—The *ninth* grade is that of *Catholicos*, of which we shall take a nearer view at Echmiádzin.

*Lay monks* form no part of the Armenian monastic system. Now and then indeed an anchorite is to be found, and more frequently other individuals make a vow to reside for a time in a convent. But their mode of life, and the length of their continuance in it, both remain subject only to their individual choice. Laymen, bound by vows to perpetual celibacy, subjected to the laws of regular monastic orders, and attached for life to convents, are not, so far as we have been able to learn, at present known among the Armenians.

An interesting question, suggested by this view of the orders of the Armenian clergy, demands here a moment's attention. What more general classification of the nine grades now enumerated is recognised by the Armenians? The secretary of the Catholicos, one of the most intelligent of the vartabéds at Echmiádzin, replied to this question, that all the clergy belong either to the *deaconhood* or *priesthood*, *i. e.* either to the class which can, or to that which cannot, say mass; and he denied that any *triple* classification is recognized. Two of the most intelligent bishops we have found firmly denied the propriety of any classification into less than *seven* divisions, which are the seven lower grades, the bishops and catholicos being considered only as branches of the seventh grade or priesthood, differing in dignity. And the leading vartabéds of one convent assented to the idea, that all above deacons are merely priests of different dignity. Only one individual, an old bishop at Echmiádzin, admitted three general orders, and he knew not in which of them some of the grades should be classed. Indeed, the idea seemed to have been first suggested to him by our question, and to have pleased him from its analogy to Paul's triple division of heaven, the reason he assigned for admitting a triple classification of the clergy. If we say there is an essential difference between the priest and the bishop, because the latter only can ordain





the former, we must admit, for the same reason, as essential a difference between the bishop and the Catholicos. If we go to the ordination ceremony of each grade, and regard its essence as consisting in the laying on of hands, as its name in Armenian imports, we can make no general classification, for each of the nine grades is conferred by the imposition of hands. If anointing with oil be regarded as the essential part of ordination, we shall then leave out the first six grades entirely, and have the priests, bishops, and Catholicos for the three cardinal orders, since they and they only are anointed with meirón at ordination. The tonsure cannot be regarded as an essential part of ordination in any case among the Armenians, though it is customarily performed upon those who are admitted to one of the four lowest grades. A shaven crown is often seen among the common people.

The primary design of convents was to promote the piety of their inmates, by enabling them to renounce the world and spend a life of devotion and holy meditation. As a secondary object, they have sometimes aided in the work of education and the promotion of science. The first idea springs from an entirely mistaken view of the nature of man and of Christianity, and we are therefore not surprised at its complete failure. Probably not an instance can be found in Armenia where the retirement of a convent is improved for purposes of devotion. Instead of being retreats from the passions that agitate the world, convents are the very centres of the most unprincipled ambition, of the darkest intrigue, and of the bitterest envy. Their history is but a tissue of quarrelling and dissension. Erected for purposes of self-denial, no where, so often as in them, is the question asked, "What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed?" If the funds are at hand, no one, sooner than a monk, furnishes himself with good dinners and splendid robes. Under the veil of celibacy is covered every species of unchastity. Of this so thoroughly are even the common people convinced, that no man, we were assured, puts confidence in the continence of a var-tabéd in his intercourse with his family. So infamous is Echmi-ádzin for unnatural vice, that we heard it assigned as the reason for its having no school. Parents are reluctant to send their sons thither. In a word, they are "holds of every foul spirit, and cages of every unclean and hateful bird." They can, of course, exert no good influence upon the religion of the people. According to the



rules of the Armenian church, indeed, monastic priests are never allowed to have charge of a parish. With only occasional exceptions, therefore, they say mass, confess, &c., merely in convents, where they are expected always to reside. The special duty of the high vartabéds is to preach; and instances have been known of their going through the country, in the discharge of it, not only without orders from their superiors, but even under their persecuting opposition. But, alas! no such instances now exist. They preach only when ordered by the bishops. The object of their orders will appear when we speak of the diocesans.

Instead of contributing to enlighten their nation by schools, or the publication of books, or, which is the least that should be expected of them, serving as seminaries for the education of the clergy, the convents of Armenia are themselves seats of great ignorance. The deacons, who are supposed to occupy in them the place of learners, instead of being kept to their studies, are employed in the fields, or in going on errands, or in other menial services for the monks, so as generally to get no more than one or two lessons in a week, and in some cases none at all. Hence, when advanced to the grade of vartabéd, they have very little knowledge at the best, and sometimes are hardly able to read. They are indeed required by the canons to be acquainted with the Scriptures, and to believe what the fathers of their church have taught, which implies that they have read them; but very few in fact have done so, or are acquainted with the ancient language in which they are written. The vartabéds themselves very rarely study or read at all, and are therefore advanced to the episcopate in the same state of ignorance. In a word, visit the library of any convent, and you would almost be persuaded that none of the monks are aware that the books it contains were made to be read. The solitary old vartabéd of St. Hagóp, already mentioned, is an honourable exception to the general indifference of his brethren to their own and their countrymen's intellectual improvement. In the convent of Seván, too, there is a vartabéd who devotes himself to teaching. But these are only glimmering tapers in a starless night of ignorance.

To complete our view of the Armenian monastic clergy, a few remarks need to be added upon *diocesan bishops*, who also, when practicable, always reside in convents. Being selected from the mass of bishops with which all the large convents are stocked, more through the influence of intrigue, money, or respectability of



family, than out of regard to real merit, they are apt to be ignorant as their companions, and sometimes actually know little or nothing of the ancient language, or of the books contained in it. A young weasel of intelligence and education supplies their deficiencies, and transacts their business. Their habits and moral character are not known to differ at all from those of the other inhabitants of convents. One was not long since sent from Echmiádzin to a neighbouring diocese to act as colleague to an aged bishop, who had reached his dotage. He first beat the old man into a disclosure of his treasures, and then forced him to leave his diocese entirely. Two vartabéds died suddenly soon after, as if by poison; and the new bishop, with a haughty contempt of public opinion, carried his dissoluteness to the extent of keeping mistresses openly in his convent. The people at last made their complaints to be heard by government, and he was recalled to Echmiádzin. Love of gain and of pleasure is rarely carried by bishops, it is true, to this excess of open violence and debauchery; but with hardly an exception, they use every practicable quiet method of fleecing their flocks, as may be seen by a view of their sources of income.

A diocesan's establishment consists of all the inmates of the convent in which he resides, and he is believed to have no purse distinct from its general treasury. Taking into the account, therefore, that all its expenses are drawn from his resources, we may reckon his *first* source of income to be the funds of his convent. Convents are generally possessed of property, in lands, tenants, and live stock, which affords the only support of their inmates, unless the residence of a bishop, or the possession of some object of pilgrimage gives them other resources. The convent of Datev owns sixteen villages, including that of Datev itself, from which it received, under the Persian government, both the capitation and the land taxes. The whole of the former, and half of the latter, is now claimed by the Russian emperor. Still, the convent is supposed to have derived from them in 1830, about 500 chetverts (150,000lbs.) of grain.—A *second* source of income is ordination fees. No bishop, it is believed, ordains a priest without pay. The bishop of Kántसार will ordain no one for less than fifty silver roubles (about 37.50 dollars), and whoever will contribute that sum, is pretty sure to receive the imposition of his hands. The bishop of Datev also demands fifty, or, at the least, twenty-five silver roubles. Such universal simony, besides converting the



episcopate into an office for the sale of benefices, introduces the most unworthy men into the sacred profession, and multiplies the priests far beyond the number which can be so supported, as to leave them free for the duties of their profession.—The *third* is marriage fees. No person can marry without a license from his bishop, for which, in ordinary cases, he must pay, in this vicinity, a silver rouble (about 75 cts.) And, besides, the church has so multiplied the prohibited degrees of affinity, as to leave a man but a very limited circle from which to select his wife, unless he infringe upon some canon, and an extra sum only will obtain the necessary license to do that.\* A widower, moreover, can take a virgin only by paying his bishop well for the forbidden privilege; nothing but a handsome present will render a third marriage legal; and the expense of a fourth can be borne only by the very rich.—The *fourth* is the inheritance of all who die childless. At the death of every man something usually goes to the bishop. If a man die without children, real or adopted, he claims his whole estate, except a seventh, which falls to the widow.—The *fifth* is from the death of priests. All the clothes and furniture of a deceased priest go at once to the bishop. Then, in this vicinity, fifteen silver roubles are demanded for the funeral sacrifice, which, however, the bishop never makes, but pockets the money. And besides, he exacts four and a half silver roubles for the grave, and the same sum for the burial service. Reflect now that the priests are perhaps never freeholders, and you will see that the bishops get nearly or quite all their estates.—They receive, also, by means of charity-boxes in the churches, and through other mediums, occasional contributions from the people. And in some parts of Turkey they regularly sell each parish to its priest for a stipulated price per annum, besides claiming a fixed per centage of all baptismal and other fees. That such is their practice in Armenia I cannot affirm. In fact, you must regard this view of the income of bishops as imperfect; the particular sums, especially, are probably true of only one or two dioceses.

You will ask, what spiritual services do the diocesans render their people, in return for so much money extracted from them? It is said that they sometimes preach upon special occasions, but we

\* The Jesuit missionaries say, that in the Armenian church marriage between persons related by blood to the fourth degree, by marriage to the third degree, by spiritual adoption (standing sponsors at baptism) to the third degree, and by legal adoption to the second degree, is forbidden. See Lett. Ed. et Cur.



heard of no instance except at Tebriz. They sometimes send out their vartabéds to preach, and make visitations as their vicars but very rarely, and then only to collect contributions. Not an instance is known where a bishop keeps his vartabéds preaching for the instruction of his charge; so that, instead of hearing the gospel proclaimed, the people rarely listen to a sermon, the sole object of which is not to get money. If ever the bishop makes a visitation of his diocese in person, it has the same pecuniary object. The result is, that his approach, or that of his vicar, is looked upon as a great calamity. As confirmation, however, in the Armenian church devolves not upon bishops, and as ordination, their principal duty, can be done in their convents, they never, in these parts, trouble themselves with personally visiting their dioceses.

With such a view of the character of the bishops of Armenia before you, you will be sorry that I am obliged to add, that their influence over the minds of the people is very great. In some instances, indeed, the voice of the laity is sufficiently loud to overrule their wishes, but they are extremely rare. Ignorance and superstition are generally too prevalent to allow resistance or disobedience to be thought of. The respect yielded to them, however, is the effect of fear, rather than of esteem. With them is lodged the tremendous power of excommunication, which is believed both to shut the gates of heaven effectually against all who incur its anathemas, and to bring along with it the severest temporal judgment upon their persons and property.

I am happy to close these remarks upon the monasticism of Armenia, by assuring you that it is on the decline. A new convent was not heard of, or seen by us, in any part of that country; but in every province the ruins of old ones were numerous. While only the three already mentioned in Kara-bagh are inhabited, five have gone to decay. And the province of Eriván, which, 150 years ago, contained twenty-three for men and five for women\*, now has but ten, among which are no nunneries. Indeed, the only Armenian nunneries we heard of any where, are the two small establishments at Tiflis and Shoosha.

\* Chardin, vol. 2, p. 177.



## LETTER XIII.

FROM DATEV TO NAKHCHEVAN.

Village of Datev—Lor—Substitute for ovens and fire-places—An evening conversation—The Armenian parish clergy—Their appointment—Qualifications—Habits and character—Duties—Incomes—Former state of Lor—Low diet of the common people—Condition of the Armenian females—Beautiful winter scenery—Sisiyán—Hospitality of the mountaineers—Reception at Shaghád—Observance of the Sabbath—Attendance on public worship—Descent from the mountains—Selasíz—Commencement of Persian manners—Arrival at Nakhcheván.

DEAR SIR,

WE left the convent of Datev at 10 A.M. on the morning of the 4th of November, my last date. The bishop accompanied us to the village of Datev, about a mile distant, whither he was going to attend the last of the first eight masses said for the soul of his deceased superior. It contains, according to one informant, 50, and according to another, 80 houses. As we stopped only a moment for a guide, we had no opportunity to examine it. A rain that had been drizzling all the morning, now became a driving snow-storm, which completely impeded our prospect the remainder of our ride. With difficulty we climbed a mountain ridge, where the snow was already of considerable depth, and the wind and cold oppressive; and then, by a declivity fearfully steep, descended into the bottom of a deep confined valley, where we found the quiet village of Lor, at 2 P.M.

Our muleteers, not at all to our dissatisfaction, refused, on account of the storm, to go farther, although we had rode but two fúrsakhs; and we called upon the kakhia for lodgings. He welcomed us hospitably to his own family room. It was under ground, like all the houses of these mountains, and lighted only by an open skylight in the centre, through which the snow was continually falling. In different parts, piles of grain were heaped upon the ground, which formed the floor. Here a deep wicker basket plastered with mud and cow-dung, answered the purpose of a flour-barrel; there was a large chest of bread, the principal food of the family. In a dark corner was a pile of carpets, mattresses, cushions, and coverlets for their accommodation at night; and in another direction stood a cradle, with its crying contents.



What attracted our attention most this stormy day, was the apparatus for warming us. It was the species of oven called *tannoor*, common throughout Armenia, and also in Syria, but converted here for purposes of warmth into what is called a *tandoor*. A cylindrical hole is sunk about three feet in the ground in some part of the room, with a flue entering it at the bottom to convey a current of air to the fire which heats it. For the emission of smoke no other provision is made than the open skylight in the terrace. When used for baking bread, the dough, being flattened to the thickness of common pasteboard, perhaps a foot and a half long by a foot broad, is stuck to its smooth sides by means of a cushion upon which it is first spread. It indicates, by cleaving off, when it is done, and being then packed down in the family chest, it lasts at least a month in the winter, and ten days in the summer. Such is the only bread known in the villages of Armenia; and even the cities of Eriván and Tebriz offer no other variety than a species perhaps only twice as thick, and so long that it might almost be sold by the yard. To bake it, the bottom of a large oven is covered with pebbles (except one corner where a fire is kept constantly burning), and upon them when heated, the sheets of dough are spread. The convenience of such thin bread, where knives and forks are not used, and spoons are rare, is, that a piece of it doubled enables you to take hold of a mouthful of meat more delicately than with your bare fingers; or, when properly folded, helps you to convey a spoonful safely to your mouth to be eaten with the spoon itself. When needed for purposes of warmth, the *tannoor* is easily transformed into a *tandoor*. A round stone is laid upon the mouth of the oven, when well heated, to stop the draught; a square frame about a foot in height is then placed above it; and a thick coverlet spread over the whole, lies upon the ground around it to confine the warmth. The family squat upon the floor, and warm themselves by extending their legs and hands into the heated air beneath it, while the frame holds, as occasion requires, their lamp or their food. Its economy is evidently great. So full of crevices are the houses, that an open fire-place must consume a great quantity of fuel, and then almost fail of warming even the air in its immediate vicinity. The *tandoor*, heated once, or at the most, twice in twenty-four hours, by a small quantity of fuel, keeps one spot continually warm, for the relief of all numb fingers and frozen toes.



Seated in the family circle with our host, his wife, and children, and a few neighbours, around the tandoor, we passed an interesting evening. He was the son of one of the priests of the village, was a sober-minded thinking man, and possessed much more information than one would expect to find in such a place. His own inclination gave the conversation a serious turn, and to prove or illustrate the various topics discussed, he brought forth and frequently referred to the *family Bible*; a treasure which we found in no other instance in Armenia, and even here perhaps an unwillingness to think that it does not exist, rather than the real circumstances of the case, induce me to use the name. It was a quarto printed at Moscow, and given by the missionaries at Shoosha to the father of our host; and though in the ancient dialect, we found him able to understand it, and somewhat acquainted with its contents. His seriousness made him a promising subject for missionary instruction; and that his candour was encouraging, may be shewn by the effect which only one passage of Scripture had upon his mind. Having learned from Antonio that bishops in our country are married, he appealed to us with the greatest astonishment, for the reason of so uncanonical a practice. We simply referred him to 1 Tim. iii. 2. After examining it attentively, his astonishment was completely reversed, and he asked us with quite as great anxiety, why the Armenian church had forbidden the custom. We replied, that in the face of such plain passages of Scripture, we could not be responsible for its decisions, and he must ask his own bishops the reason of them.

Finding that the conversation had continued, before we were aware, to a late hour, we apologized for breaking in upon his hours of sleep. But he assured us that neither he nor his family were at all incommoded, for his father sometimes entertained them till almost morning, by reading and religious conversation. This declaration, added to the character which the old gentleman had impressed upon his son, made us extremely regret, that his having gone to the mass at Datev, and being prevented by the storm from returning, deprived us of an opportunity of seeing him. Our host assigned us our lodgings for the night upon carpets around the four sides of the tandoor; where, warmed by its heat, and the furs in which we wrapped ourselves, we slept comfortably until morning, while he with his wife and children lay down a few feet distant.



Being himself the son of a priest, the kakhia gave us some important information respecting the *secular* or *parish* priesthood, which you will allow me to combine with what we obtained from other sources, and present to you here, while what I have said upon the monastic orders is fresh in your recollection.—Their *appointment* rests with the inhabitants of the village where they officiate, and of which they are almost always themselves natives. The laity are entitled to a voice in the affairs of the church in some other respects, but their rights seem never to have been reduced to any regular form, either by law or custom. No committees are appointed, and when a question occurs which seems to require the opinion of his people, the priest merely calls perhaps a few of the acknowledged leaders of his parish to the church door after service, for the purpose of consultation. The right of electing their own priests the laity universally exercise, and rarely, if ever, does a bishop attempt to interfere with it, by imposing upon them one without their request, or contrary to it. The inhabitants of a town or village fix upon some one of their number, pay his ordination fee to the bishop, and he of course becomes their priest. Should the Armenian church ever engage in the struggles of a reformation, this invaluable right, being already in their possession, will not be one of the many for which the laity will have to contend. Its value seems now, however, to be extremely small. Not even do the people avail themselves of it to reduce their priests to the moderate number which they can respectably support. The proportion of priests in the villages, will average at least one to every fifty families; in the towns it is somewhat less. I must add, too, that though their election rests with the people, their bishop has the power of deposing them at will; and the apprehension of such an event makes them perfectly submissive to the nod of the higher clergy.

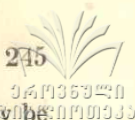
Of their *qualifications*, the most important in its practical bearing is marriage. So cautiously do the regulations of the church guard against allowing an unmarried clergy to have the cure of souls, that they require every parish priest not only to be married, but to have one child, before he is ordained; and if a priest's wife dies, he is at once to retire to a convent. The latter regulation, however, is not strictly executed in case of great age, and where, under Turkish law, the ecclesiastical authorities are but imperfectly obeyed. A priest thus become a widower and admitted to a con-



vent, takes the rank of vartabéd, and is admissible to the highest ecclesiastical grades. The age requisite for admission to priest's orders is twenty-five; but we are not certain that this regulation is not frequently dispensed with. The least literary and doctrinal qualifications required by law, are, that candidates shall be acquainted with the Scriptures, and be orthodox in sentiment. But in practice, the former is never exacted, nor the latter indeed any farther than that they assent by proxy, to the question, whether they believe in the right creed, without being made to repeat it. The only education which is actually required as necessary, is an ability to read. To know how to write is not deemed essential, and in some cases at least is actually dispensed with. Much less is a knowledge of the language in which the church books are written demanded. In a word, the priests are often below the common standard of respectability in talent and education.

Of the *habits* and *character* of the parish priesthood, we can give you, with some important exceptions (of which we were encouraged to hope the father of our host might be one), but a bad account. They make no effort to improve their own minds, nor those of their people, in literary or religious knowledge; but are given to indolence and the pleasures of the table. A share of the sacrifices being part of their income, they are of course invited to them all, and their very profession thus leads them to be gormandizers and hard drinkers. It is affirmed that an Armenian priest will drink twenty bottles of wine at a feast! The report seems incredible even in the vicinity of the wine-bibbing Georgians and Mingrelians; still its very existence, though false, shews that the evil is not a slight one. The temptation is so strong, that young men of good habits, before entering the profession, have been observed to give way to it, and soon assimilate themselves to the common character of the priesthood, which is decidedly lower than that of the generality of the laity. While we were at Shoosha, a priest once went to evening prayers so intoxicated that he fell to quarrelling with the people who had assembled, until they were obliged to thrust him out of the church, and go home with their prayers unsaid. The occurrence made some talk for a day or two, but was soon forgotten as no very strange thing; and the vartabéd, who, as wekeel of the Catholicos just at that time, degraded another priest for sending his children to the missionary school, did not regard it as worthy of attention.—With such a view of the qualifi-





cations and character of the priests before you, you need hardly be told that their *influence* is very small. They are not respected, and their reproofs are but little regarded, not being backed, like those of the higher clergy, by the dreaded power of excommunication.

In looking at the *duties* of the Armenian parish priests, we must pass over preaching entirely. That belongs to the vartabéds. We heard indeed of two or three priests (and they were not more than two or three) who attempt it, but it is considered rather as an extra service, than as devolving upon them by the obligation of their office. Their routine of duty lies in the performance of the church services, in confessing, baptizing, marrying, burying, and the like. Of the church services, the *celebration of mass* is the principal, and is in fact the distinctive business of their office. For we shall not get a correct idea of the priesthood of the Armenian, any more than of the Romish church, until we leave the New Testament ministry entirely, and go back to the old dispensation. Like the Jewish priesthood, they are designed to offer gifts and sacrifices for the sins of the people, and that is done by the supposed sacrifice of Christ in the celebration of mass. Even the customs of that dispensation are imitated in some of the observances of ceremonial purity. In order to prevent the contamination which might otherwise result, and which would entirely disqualify him for so holy a duty, the priest is bound by the canons to separate himself from his family, and sleep in the church for fifteen nights previous to saying mass. He then says mass fifteen days, and remains fifteen days afterward before joining his family. During the first and the last fifteen days, he makes wafers for the mass, baptizes, administers the viaticum, and the like. When the priests are few, which happens in all villages and in some towns, these rules, of course, cannot be strictly adhered to; but even then the priests are supposed to sleep in a separate room in their houses. As an initiation to this system of segregation, every priest is obliged, immediately after his ordination, to fast forty days, shut up in the church, or some room connected with it, and eating but once a day.

The *income* of the priests is derived entirely from perquisites. We could not learn that any church in this region has funds or glebes, and our informant to-night assured us, that if they had, the convents would take possession of them. In some parts of Turkey the churches are indeed rich; but even there their income, so far as we have learned, is not appropriated to the support of the priests,



but to the purchase of candles and other ornaments. ever, do the clergy engage personally in the labours of the field, in any trade, or in merchandize. Though in the latter, perhaps, they sometimes vest their funds through the agency of another, and in the former, their children and hired men are often employed to increase the revenue yielded by sources properly clerical. One of these sources is baptism. For it the priest receives, in this vicinity, from one to three penabáds.\* Another is marriage, which yields him a silver rouble. A third is the burial of the dead; for which he is paid, according to circumstances, from a penabád to two silver roubles; besides receiving whatever the sympathies of friends may deposit in a plate that is placed upon the breast of the dead, as they go to kiss the cross by his side at the funeral. For confession nothing is directly charged. But whenever an individual goes to the communion, which is of course immediately after confession, he finds the Gospel and a plate placed by his confessor at the church door, one of which he kisses, and in the other deposits a sum of money, perhaps less than a penabád. Or, according to another custom, each confessor receives an extra sum from his parishioners during the fifteen days of his turn for saying mass, either deposited upon a plate that is carried around the church, or given to him privately at his room. Masses for the dead always procure for the officiator a small sum of money, perhaps a penabád, besides his share of the sacrifice that usually accompanies them. Simple prayers are said gratis for the deceased friends of the poor, and a donation is expected only from the rich. For blessing the houses of his parishioners, also, which he does at Christmas and at Easter, the priest receives perhaps half a penabád. In some places, also, where the ceremony consists in saying prayers over bread and salt, while the salt is thrown into the cistern, and one loaf left for the family, a second loaf falls to him. The only thing that looks like a regular salary in this system of clerical support, is, that some churches have a permanent box for contributions to the priest, and in some villages he receives a small quantity of grain from his parishioners.

How lamentable must be the effect, both upon priest and people, of doling out thus in retail the services of religion. It makes every

\* The particular *sums* here given were mentioned to us in the villages of Kara-bagh. They vary in different places, and can furnish only a very conjectural estimate of the amount of a priest's income. The same *items*, it is believed, are paid for every where. The *penabád* is about 15 cts. and the *rouble* about 75 cts.



morsel of spiritual food almost as much an article of merchandise and barter, as is the meat that is sold in the market for the nourishment of the body. And besides, so far as anti-scriptural ceremonies are sources of profit, it must set the priesthood in opposition to missionary efforts, for those efforts touch directly their most sensitive part, the purse. You will recollect, in conclusion, how much of the amount thus scraped together in pittance, by the priests, from the labouring people, is poured, at their decease, into the laps of the monastic clergy, to be hoarded up in golden church ornaments and costly clerical robes, or to be expended in the support of useless indolence.

*Nov. 5.* A heavy fall of snow continuing the whole day, prevented our departure, and confined our observations to the *village* and the *family*.—The village in former times was populous, but when Nadir Shah vented his rage upon this province for its rebellion, every soul emigrated to Constantinople. After forty years of desolation, its present inhabitants obtained permission from the khan of Shoosha to rebuild it as his tenants. They number only twelve houses, and are served by two priests, who have also charge of two other neighbouring villages of fifteen houses each. One of them, the father of our host, teaches five children. The appearance of the church confirmed this historical tradition. Its size, the thickness and solidity of its walls of stone, and the proportions of its arches within, placed it decidedly before any village church we had seen. It seemed built for ages, and stood up in striking contrast to the underground cabins of the villages; though, like them, its scanty furniture and ornaments presented marks of poverty. Local tradition says it was built by a merchant who was a native of the place, in the time of Shah Abbas. An inscription over the door places the date of its erection 174 years ago, when, according to our informant, the village contained 300 families.

The extreme abstemiousness of the family of our host, though fairly representing the diet of the Armenian peasants generally, would be considered almost the extreme of starvation by our well-fed countrymen, among whom the very paupers live better than the respectable farmers of Armenia. No meal was cooked, and, it being Friday, dry sheets of bread, taken at the pleasure of each individual, from the family chest, and raw onions torn from strings suspended around the room, formed the only food that was eaten. The spareness of this diet was indeed greater than it would have



been on any other than a fast day. But you must recollect, that, there being more than 150 such days in a year, nearly the half of an Armenian's life is spent upon fasting food, which cannot, in his native country, afford him a much greater variety. For so strict are the canons of his church, and the general practice of his nation, that no animal food of any kind is eaten; olive oil, even if in imitation of his less strict brethren of Constantinople he might venture to use it, is too scarce and too dear for him to obtain; and, except perhaps a little oil of sesame, his only resort for a greater variety than bread and onions, is to rice and beans, with a few culinary vegetables, and, in places favourable for its growth, some species of fruit. Nor on other days is the table of an Armenian peasant much more plentifully supplied. Flesh of any kind he rarely tastes; and the productions of the field, the garden, and the dairy, appearing in the simple form of bread and cheese or yoghoort, with the addition of an onion or a raw turnip, and an occasional dish of rice or beans, form almost his whole living.

We generally broke in upon this abstemiousness by ordering a few boiled eggs or a fowl to be added to our piláv of rice. And in the morning and evening a cup of coffee or tea, articles never used by the peasants of Armenia, was sometimes prepared from our own stores, and being shared with our host helped to increase his hospitality. This evening, just as our table was about to be spread upon the tandoor, the melik of the neighbouring village of Pernaghoot entered, and seated himself in the circle. In despite of the canons of his church, he accepted our invitation to partake with us, and no less in despite of government espionage, he indulged himself, as he plunged his hands in the piláv and jointed the chicken with his fingers, in complaints of the semi-barbarism of the Russians. His treatment of both church and state was to us equally inexplicable in this land where so few venture even to think in opposition to either.

Our host's wife, like most of the women in the mountains of Kará-bagh, was unveiled. But her chin, in the usual style, was swaddled in an enormous muffler reaching to her nose, and a white cloth passing over from her forehead, flowed down upon her shoulders behind. She spoke not a loud word from the time we entered the house. If occasion required her to address a person too distant for a very low whisper to be heard, her little daughter stood by her side, and listening to her whispers, expressed her wishes



aloud. Such is the etiquette of female modesty in the presence of strangers, not only here, but extensively among the Armenians. It applies, however, only to the younger women; as we had to-day abundant evidence. For some old ladies of the neighbourhood, who happened to call, were not prevented by it, nor by the still greater obstacle of their mufflers, from almost stunning us with their chatter.

The condition of the Armenian females, as you will have inferred from what I have already said of their education, is not a little degraded. They are regarded as inferiors by the other sex, and as made only for their pleasure and service. From the idea that their virtue depends upon restraint rather than upon principle, an idea probably not far from correct in their present circumstances, they are excluded from the society of the men, and never take a part in the entertainment of visitors, except very intimate family friends. Indeed they are rarely left alone, and are allowed to go abroad but little. The difficulty of obtaining female servants and pupils at Shoosha, shews an extreme of jealousy on this point. Probably it is much greater in towns than in the country. The marriage contract is made by the parents independently of the parties concerned. Girls are often espoused as early as three or four years of age; and many are married at twelve. The earliest period at which marriage is allowed by the rules of the church to be consummated, is ten for girls, and fourteen for boys. The matrimonial tie is never dissolved except by death. For, neither in the canons of the church, nor in practice, is any other divorce known, than that termed by the papists *divortium quoad torum*, which gives the separated parties no liberty to contract another marriage. The relation which the wife sustains to the husband, is that of a servant, rather than of a companion. To give counsel and express opinions, though she sometimes does it pretty loudly, is not considered her department. She is managed more by commands than by advice, and not unfrequently is the rod called in to aid. Her influence is little felt in the family, until she has children to take her part. Even they respect her but little till she arrives at extreme old age; then she is sometimes greatly venerated. This degradation of females, and the consequent separation of the sexes in society, has a most deleterious influence upon the habits of both. Without that mutually chastening influence, which, in civilized life, the presence of each has upon the conversation of the other, the com-



mon language of both degenerates to the very lowest degree of decent vulgarity, and the parties of the men are converted into bacchanalian carousals.

*Nov. 6.* The storm passed away in the night, and a morning without clouds unveiled to us the grandeur of the mountain scenery that shuts out from the world the deep and quiet valley where we had found a refuge from the blasts of the last two days. A drape of virgin white snow veiled every part to the top of the highest peaks, and, as the sun rose above the horizon, they were brilliantly gilded by his rays. The bracing influence of a frosty atmosphere, in which the thermometer stood at  $23^{\circ}$ , gave elasticity to our spirits, and enabled us to drink in the full effect of the grandeur and beauty that surrounded us. With an affectionate farewell from our host, we started at 9 and a quarter A.M., and following the valley through a few windings, soon passed the two little hamlets already alluded to. The shepherds were just conducting forth their flocks to browse upon the shrubs and weeds that peered up through the snow, while their fleecy backs afforded a warm and undisturbed footing to a species of magpie, which in these parts dares to face the severity of winter. In ascending the mountain beyond, the horse that carried our chief muleteer, failing by reason of the snow to secure a firm foot-hold in the narrow path, fell, and turned many a somerset as he rolled over and over down the rocky declivity, till arrested by a rock more prominent than the rest some fifty or a hundred feet below. Possessed of the exceeding hardiness of the horses of this region, however, he sustained no permanent injury, and the incident only served to make us more sensible of the danger to which we had been exposed in the passage of the river of Datev on the 3rd. On the summit we found a grove of stunted oaks, the last forest trees we passed on these mountains, and in fact the last we saw in travelling not far from 800 miles in different directions afterward, till we were beyond Erzroom again on our return to Constantinople!

Descending into a broad valley beyond, we passed through a small Armenian hamlet, and a quarter before 3 P.M. observed in a branch of the valley, not far to the left, the village of Sisiyán. It was at the foot of an isolated hill, on the top of which were probably the ruins of an old fortress, though the term *kúlaah* (fortress), applied to it by our guide, might mean merely natural rocks upon its summit. It is the principal place in the district, and both its name



and position seem to indicate that it is a relic of the ancient Sísar gán, which was one of the most important cantons of the province of Süník.\* It is inhabited in part by moslems; and I ought to observe, that, though since leaving Shoosha we have stopped only in Armenian villages, there are many moslems scattered through these mountains.

As we passed near the large village of Pernaghoot some distance beyond, six or eight men came out and invited us to spend the night with them, urging with much importunity that it was wintry weather, and that we should certainly be benighted in the open air on the mountains, as would have been the case, had we taken the direct road, there being no village on it for several fúrsakhs. This was the finishing touch to the uniform hospitality we had experienced since leaving Shoosha. In no case had we found the least occasion to show the commandant's order for guides and lodgings, for the former were always ready to accompany us for a trifling compensation, and those with whom we lodged, after giving us a welcome reception, in every case were thankful for the gratuity of two or three penabáds (30 or 40 cts.) for a day's food and a night's lodging for us all. We now declined the kind hospitality of our unknown friends, in order that, by pushing on a fúrsakh or two farther to another village a little off the road, we might shorten somewhat the next day's ride.

On entering Shaghád, the village in question, 6 fúrsakhs from Lor, we were assailed with a deafening jargon of clamorous voices from all directions, the import of which was, that we were fools for passing the good accommodations of Pernaghoot and coming where not a room could be found to shelter us. By dint of reasoning, scolding, and promising, however, of which the last had evidently the greatest effect, and after being shewn into one or two stables where the stench was almost suffocating, we obtained a room, which was in fact a whole house, entirely to ourselves. Now the tone was entirely changed. When once fairly under the wing of our host, nothing was too much for him to do for us. Mats and carpets were brought to cover the ground. His wife came especially to cook the piláv before our eyes, that it might be done to our taste, an attention, by the way, which we would gladly have dispensed with, for, there being no fire-place but the cylindrical oven, and no chimney to that, the smoke almost suffocated us.

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 144.



In the absence of oil and candles, butter was placed in a dish to give us light. And a frame and an old rug were borrowed from a neighbour to make us a tandoor. We were glad to be relieved from the necessity of changing the good opinion we had formed of the hospitality of the people at Kara-bagh, by learning that this village had emigrated from Khoy in Persia at the close of the last war. The reception they gave us was truly Persian. They amounted to about 30 houses, and had one church and one priest.

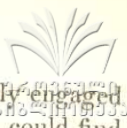
*Nov. 7.* All the precautions taken by our host to make us comfortable proved an ineffectual defence from the cold, which increased to such a degree in the night, that, at sunrise, our thermometer stood at only one degree above zero, and perhaps would have sunk lower had it had sufficient range. Our house, instead of being, in the style of Kara-bagh, half buried snugly in the side of a hill, and covered with a warm mound of earth, was composed, as is common in the warmer regions beyond the mountains, of four naked walls and a thin terrace, so easily penetrated by the cold, that with only the imperfect means of heating it afforded by a tandoor, the air within was not far from the temperature of that without. Our furs were our only resort, and, wrapped in them, we succeeded in retaining some portion of animal heat.

To-day being the Sabbath, we remained at Shaghád, and were pained to observe that a part of the people spent it in the labours of the loom, the employment in which the villagers pass away the winter months. In general, the Armenians aim to observe the literal command to do no work on the Sabbath. Especially are the labours of the field almost universally suspended in obedience to it, though at Shoosha the villagers often take that opportunity to carry their wood to market. Shops in the bazár, too, are generally closed, though they do not scruple to sell goods privately. The feeling that the Lord's day is more sacred than their other festivals is generally clear, and is expressed in a better observance of it. And conscience is often sufficiently enlightened to extort the confession, when reproved, that in profaning it they cannot but be guilty. Still, neither in their feelings nor in their conduct, can we find any just views of its sanctity. Travelling seems never to be regarded as an infringement of it; and that persons should be stopped by it when on a journey appears to them exceedingly strange. They generally spend it as a holiday in visiting and feasting, and thus commit more sin than they would by labouring.



Attendance at church is perhaps more general than one would at first conclude from the small number present at any one time. That nothing like the whole population of a place attends at every service is perfectly evident. But it must be remembered, that, as there is public worship twice every day, one may go in the morning, and another in the evening, and one who is absent to-day may be present to-morrow, and thus every one make out a tolerably frequent attendance even on common days. On the great festivals and Sabbath days a much more full attendance is observable; and, considering that there are then three services, of which some may be at one and some at another, we can believe, what we were assured in Kara-bagh, that nearly all attend church on the Lord's day. I must not forget, however, to except all marriageable and newly-married females; whom custom debar's entirely from the privileges of God's house! The term privileges, however, is improperly borrowed from more favoured lands. The churches of Armenia afford no privileges, nor do the people have for them any of those feelings which made the Psalmist esteem a day in the courts of the Lord better than a thousand. Conscience or custom, and not love, causes their attendance.

*Nov. 8.* Rising before the break of day, we hastened our departure for a warmer region. The atmosphere seemed colder than yesterday, but a smiling sun soon rose without a cloud. How cheering were his first rays, as chilled and benumbed we plodded over the bleak and snow-covered mountains! Shaghád is near the river of Datev (the ancient Orodnagerd), here called the Bazár-chai, and we now recrossed it coming down from the south, where lay the lofty peak that rises back of Datev. The highest ridge we crossed was but little more elevated than Shaghád. In passing it, we entered the province of Nakhcheván, and then threaded in our descent, by the aid of a Russian military road, a deep and rugged ravine, in which spring up the first waters of the river of Nakhcheván. In a warm nook at the bottom of the steepest descent were the barracks of a permanent encampment of soldiers, whose commanding officer demanded a sight of our passports. Following the same road which, as well as the river, continues to the town of Nakhcheván, we hastened on to Kara-baba, 6 fúrsakhs from Shaghád. The ravine here opened a little and presented a moderate extent of arable surface. The village was carefully surrounded with a mud wall, but its houses, which were also of mud, were in a



ruinous state. The only spare rooms had been previously engaged for an officer who was expected in the evening, and we could find neither shelter for ourselves, nor food for our animals. At a late hour, therefore, we were obliged to push onward, not knowing but the open sky would be our only covering for the night. But an hour beyond, at a short distance from the road, we found the little moslem village of Selasíz.

*Sela-síz* may be resolved into an Arabic word with a Turkish termination, and made to signify *comfort-less*; and so the place actually proved to us. Although a whole family left its house to our disposal, it was but a single room so small as hardly to admit ourselves and our baggage. The dust of its mud-walls and floor, mixed with ashes, cleaved to every thing that touched them; its broken door excluded little of the external air; and the whole village either could not, or would not, afford us the means for making a tandoor. And bread and cheese and fried eggs were the only articles of food to be found after our long and hungry ride since daylight in the morning. But even such accommodations, given with a hospitable intent, would have been acceptable. Instead of this, however, our host in the morning, after we had paid well for every article of food, solicited a whole suit of clothes as a present for our lodgings! We have now bid farewell to every shadow of hospitality, but shall hear more professions of it than where it really in some degree existed.

In fact, you must from this point consider us as virtually in Persia. The two provinces of Nakhcheván and Eriván, now composing the province of Armenia, have too recently passed from the Persian to the Russian government, to have been materially modified by the change; and the descriptions of character and manners we hereafter give you, must be put to the amount of what we have to say of the Persian part of our tour. You will understand, of course, that these provinces, having been at the extremity of that empire, cannot be considered as in every respect fairly representing it. All I mean, is, that every thing here has a strong Persian tinge, differing very observably from whatever we had yet seen.

*Nov. 9.* Nakhcheván is but three fúrsakhs from Sela-síz. As we approached it, the plain opened and discovered to us several large villages. Cotton fields, too, of which we had seen the first at Kara-baba, now became frequent; but the plants were of a very stunted growth, being hardly more than a foot in height. Either



from unsuitable food, or from exposure to the inclemency of the weather, my health was this morning extremely disordered, and I entered Nakhchevân tormented with excruciating pain. We sought for lodgings in the best of the two caravanserais the town contains. It consisted of a series of apartments inclosing an open quadrangle, with the stable in the centre, so low, that its terrace was nearly even with the ground. The best room was given us. It was about eight or ten feet square, with walls and floor of clay attaching a thick coat of dust to every thing that touched them, destitute of a fire-place, and with a door so loose, that when it was shut, the cats and hens found no difficulty in visiting us. In such lodgings, while the ground was white with snow, and it froze every night, my ague and fever took the occasion of the illness just alluded to, to renew its attacks. I did the best I could, with furs, coverlets, and warm tea, and by the timely application of quinine obtained speedy relief.

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## LETTER XIV.

### FROM NAKHCHEVAN TO ERIVAN AND ECHMIADZIN.

Description of Nakhchevân—Former Dominican mission—Ex-bishop of Aderbajân—Leave Nakhchevân—Jews of Armenia—Accommodations at Khoik—A moslem family—Moslem devotions—Mount Ararat—Zivehdüdengeh—Valley of the Aras—Dawaly—Magoo—Kürds—Khor-virâb—Ardisher—Singular fasting—Reach Erivân—Inhospitable police regulation—Description of Erivân—Ride to Echmiâdzin.

DEAR SIR,

NAKHCHEVAN claims the honour of being the oldest city in the world. Armenian etymology shews, that the name signifies *first place of descent*, or lodging\*; and Armenian tradition affirms, that Noah first resided here after descending from Mount Ararat. Such a tradition can of course rest upon no satisfactory authority; but that the whole is not of Christian origin, is proved by the fact, that the name Naxuana is given to it by Ptolemy, and that Josephus,

\* *Nakh* signifies first, and *chevân*, place of descent or lodging, corresponding exactly with *menzel* in Arabic.



fifty years before him, affirms, that the Armenians call the place where the ark rested, *the place of descent*.<sup>\*</sup> From the first mention of it in Armenian tradition, as the spot where the family of Ajtahág (Astyages) was located, it is often noticed both by native and foreign historians, as one of the most important cities in this part of Armenia. But so far back as the time of Chardin it was a heap of ruins, and formed, "in truth," says he, "a pitiable object." It is situated about two fúrsakhs from the Aras on the edge of a higher level than the alluvial plain immediately bordering upon that river. Around and in the city are numerous gardens, which even at this season gave evidence, by the size of their trees and shrubbery, of extreme luxuriance; and the abundance of quinces, pears, apples, melons, pomegranates, grapes, and almonds, which stocked the bazár, confirmed their character for fertility. The grapes especially were almost unequalled in excellence, and seemed to deserve the honour of growing on the spot where "Noah began to be an husbandman, and planted a vineyard." The melons too were so plenty, that, together with bread, they seemed to form almost the sole food of the common people. But fruits, with all their charms, are here, as almost wherever they abound, both indicative and productive of disease, by the miasmata arising from the well-watered gardens which produce them, and the vapid diet to which they lead. Nakhcheván is as noted for its sickliness as for its fertility.

The city was ruined during the last war, and its inhabitants have not yet recovered energy to rebuild it. Wherever you turn, nothing but dilapidated walls meet your eye; and these being composed entirely of dried mud, of which almost every edifice is built, have a peculiarly "pitiable" aspect. The appearance of desolation is increased by the fact, that not a window is open to the street. Lest we were too unfavourably impressed, however, by this our first view of Persian mud walls, and as we saw no other style of building for several months, I reserve a more particular description for some future occasion. That the place was not very inviting to us, you may infer from our accommodations already alluded to. On returning from Eriván, we determined to obtain better rooms, and accepted the hospitality of a melik who had invited us to lodge with him. The apartment assigned us was a stable, filled with horses and grooms, and so dark that we could not possibly see to

<sup>\*</sup> St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 267.



read. At the first sight of it, though persuaded that he was far from intending an insult, we thanked him for his kindness, and withdrew. We then thought of applying to the police, but fearing no better success, as it appeared doubtful whether the town contained any good rooms, we returned to our old caravanserai.

Nakhchevân contains, besides perhaps 2000 moslem families, between eight and nine hundred families of Armenians, of which 100 or 120 are original inhabitants, and the remainder emigrants from Persia. It is the capital of a province of the same name, whose governor is a moslem khan. We had a letter to him from the governor of the whole province of Armenia, on our return from Erivân, but he was not in town, and we failed of seeing him. The Russian major commandant, however, who formed one of the body of *responsible advisers* with which government has carefully surrounded him, treated us with attention at both visits. Respecting the province, we obtained very little statistical information, except that before the war, it contained not more than 300 families of Armenians. The number of that nation which subsequently emigrated from Persia, was stated to us by their bishop, from documents lying before him, at 9000 families. But how many of them settled in this vicinity we were not informed. We afterward found several villages of them in the province of Erivân.

The ancient and extensive Dominican mission, which once had its seat in this province, is now no more. It was commenced about A.D. 1320, by an Italian papal monk of the Dominican order. Such success attended it, that soon nearly 30 Armenian villages embraced the faith of Rome, and acknowledged subjection to a papal bishop, who, after being consecrated at Rome, resided in the village of Abarân (Abarner), with the title of archbishop of Nakhchevân. Many of the villages also contained convents, governed by Armenian Dominicans. And "to form good subjects, youth of that nation were from time to time sent to Rome to be educated in the sciences, and in the spirit of the order of St. Dominic." With the exception of mass, and the offices of the church, which are chanted in Armenian, the Roman ritual was strictly followed. The papal Tournefort extols their holy life, and assures us there were no better Christians in all the East. Already, however, in the days of Chardin (A.D. 1673), had twenty of these villages returned to the proper Armenian faith, and the inhabitants of the remaining eight were dropping off daily, under intolerable exactions



from Persian governors, caused by an attempt of a special mission from the pope to the Shah, to withdraw them from their jurisdiction.\* Abarner, Jahoog, and another village, the name of which we neglected to note, held out until lately; but now empty churches are all that remain of their papacy. The bishop of Datev, within whose diocese they fall, assured us that their papal inhabitants had not returned to the Armenian church, but had emigrated. Some of these emigrants, or their descendants, now inhabit Smyrna.

The whole province of Nakhcheván belongs to the bishoprick of Datev or Süník; but we found here the emigrant bishop of Aderbaiján, and paid him a visit. His name was Pasegh. He formerly presided over all the Armenians of Aderbaiján, and part, at least, of the pashalik of Bayezed, and resided in the convent of Tateós Arakeál (Thaddeus the apostle), in the district of Magoo. His diocese was one of the largest, and his convent one of the oldest and most distinguished in Armenia, built, tradition asserts, on the spot where the apostle whose name it bears was martyred.† At the head of most of his flock, he retired within the Russian dominions at the close of the late war, and the moveable property of his convent, which was formerly great in furniture and flocks, was transferred to Echmiádzin. He seemed less than forty years old, of a vigorous constitution, well nurtured by good living, and of a naturally acute mind, cheered by a fine flow of spirits. Possessed of a pleasing address, he received us in a friendly manner, and learning that we were of the clerical profession, inquired what rank we held in it, as if desirous to graduate his attentions accordingly. From a conversation thus introduced, respecting our ecclesiastical polity, he passed to the doctrines of our religion, but seemed satisfied as soon as he learned that they resembled those of the Germans. He declared his pleasure, however, at being acquainted with the missionaries at Shoosha, and during the whole interview manifested quite a *gentlemanly* reluctance to express any opinions that might give occasion for argument; so much so, indeed, as to create in us a painful apprehension that it arose from the indifference of infidelity.

He soon inquired, as had almost every one with whom we had conversed since leaving Shoosha, the object of our present journey. We answered as usual, that it was to obtain information respecting

\* Tournefort, vol. 2, p. 407. Chardin, vol. 2, p. 300. St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 145.

† St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 136.



Armenia and its inhabitants, of which, in our distant country, little was known. He seemed to feel himself called upon to apologize for the condition in which we found his countrymen, and said, we had come from an enlightened to an ignorant country, and possibly might often feel constrained to laugh at its inhabitants. We assured him that it was indeed true, that with us the people are generally more or less educated, while here we found them as universally ignorant; but instead of being an occasion for ridicule, this fact only gave us exceeding great pain. He attributed this ignorance to their having been, until recently, under the yoke of Mohammedan tyranny. But when we expressed to him the extreme desirableness that they should avail themselves of their present favourable circumstances to become enlightened, he confessed that no attempt had yet been made, and that there was not a school in the whole province.

A paroxysm of my disease attacking me, cut short our visit; but Antonio remained awhile with the bishop, and directing the conversation to topics suggested by his own recent inclination to scriptural views, drew from him some concessions by which he was much astonished, and which confirmed our idea of the bishop's indifference to such things. On learning that we had the ultimate design of establishing schools for the Armenians, the bishop said it would be well if we would not, like the Germans, preach against the mediation of the saints. But when pressed by the argument that Scripture ascribes only to God the prerogative of searching the heart, and that the saints cannot of course judge of the sincerity of our prayers, he confessed that Scripture mentions only the mediation of Christ, and that others have subsequently introduced that of the saints. In reference to the fasts, too, he allowed that Scripture teaches, that "not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man," and placed them upon the general ground of penance. Several other points were brought forward, and the bishop finally answered the whole, by declaring, that the differences between all sects of Christians might be easily accommodated to the satisfaction of every one, by a general council, but he knew not when it would be held. The same idea of a general council had been introduced in his conversation with us, while speaking of the several points of difference between the Armenian and Greek churches; and reminded us of the query already suggested to us by others, whether an attempt will not be made to unite the



Armenian with the Greek church, and of the possibility that his mind had been already directed to such a measure. Before we left town, he politely sent us, of his own accord, a letter of introduction to the secretary of the Catholicos at Echmiádzin.

We left Nakhcheván at half-past 7 A.M. on the 13th of November, for Eriván and Echmiádzin. During the morning, the alluvial of the Aras lay a little below us on the left; on the right was a range of hills, composed of variegated and unusual colours, and without a sign of vegetation; while our road passed over an undulating and uncultivated surface. Among the hills not far from us, was a salt mine, which we intended to visit on our return; but were dissuaded, in expectation of being able to examine a more remarkable one near Khoy. Two others are worked in the same range of mountains, one a little to the north-east of Nakhcheván, and the other to the west of Eriván. In many other parts, also, along the valley of the Aras, and in Aderbaiján, we were assured, mineral salt can be found by digging only a few feet beneath the surface. Large slabs of it, resembling grey marble so much that we at first mistook them for building stones, met our eye, in piles, or transported in carts or on animals, in almost every place from Kars to Tebriz. No other salt is used in these parts, and so pure is it, that it is believed to be universally only pulverized, to fit it for the table. All the water on the road, this morning, brought down so many mineral ingredients from the adjacent hills, as to be unpalatable.

Among the two or three who joined our little caravan at Nakhcheván, was a Jewish merchant of Akhaltsikhe, whose national timidity induced him, for the sake of company, thus to break, as he supposed, the fourth commandment, by travelling on Saturday. He was uttering lamentations all the way, and every little accident that befell himself or his horse, was interpreted as an expression of the displeasure of God at his sin. But he only got from our moslem muleteers, the taunting consolation, that, as we were to rest tomorrow, he would make up for breaking his own, by keeping the Christian Sabbath.

The Jews were once numerous in the valley of the Aras, and in the adjacent parts of Armenia. Without reckoning Shampád, the ancestor of the Pakradians, and his compatriots, whose descendants had probably lost their distinctive Jewish character long before they were converted to Christianity in company with the



Armenian nation; we are told that Dikrán, on taking possession of the throne of the Seleucidæ, invaded Palestine, 83 A.C., and carrying thence a company of Jewish captives, settled them in Vartkés, now Vagharshabád\*; and that Pazaprán, when in connection with his Persian auxiliaries he had taken Jerusalem, transported Hircanus, the high priest whom he deposed, with a company of his countrymen, to the city of Shamiramagérd, now Van.† Whatever credit may be due to these traditions, more authentic history informs us, that in the fourth century, besides the colony in Vagharshabád and a large number in Nakhcheván, the Jews amounted in Ardashád to 9000, in Zarehaván (now Diadeen) to 8000, and in Van to at least 18,000 families.‡ But they suffered even more severely than the Armenians, from the persecutions of the fire-worshippers; and under Shahpoor Second, toward the close of the same century, were all either destroyed, or transported to Persia.§

Now there is not a Jew in the whole valley of the Aras; nor, except the colony in Akhaltsikhe and Colchis, to which our companion this morning belonged, another in Daghistán and its vicinity, and a third in Salmás and Oormih, did we hear of any within the field of our inquiry in this region. The first have been already mentioned, and the last will come under review hereafter. Of the others we can give you little more than statistical information. They seem to have been once more numerous than they now are, as among the moslem villages in the province of Derbénd, many are said to have been once Jews. At present, the large market town of Vertashin, not far from Nookha, contains about 100 families. Near Shámakhy is another market town entirely inhabited by them, to the number of two or three hundred families. In the bazárs of Bakoo may be found a number, but they are only transient merchants. In the suburbs of Kooba is a large village of at least 400 families, having seven synagogues. In Derbénd they reckon 100 families, and have a caravanserai to which Jews alone resort, indicating a large population in that region. Accordingly, as you advance northward, they are said to be numerous, both in the mountains and in the province of Northern Daghistán, till you reach the large town of Andrevá, which is entirely inhabited by

\* Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 3. Mos. Choren. lib. 2, c. 15.

† Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 4. St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 139. Mos. Choren. lib. 2, c. 18.

‡ St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 115, 118, 125, 132, 139.

§ Ibid. Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 21.



them. They are all natives of the country, born of ancestors who have lived in it for ages, and speaking its language or languages. Except a few in Derbénd who are engaged in trade, they are cultivators of the soil. Since coming under the Russian government, their former oppressions have entirely ceased, and their worldly circumstances now differ little from those of their moslem neighbours. In religion, they are believed to be adherents of the Talmud.

In his missionary tours among the moslems of Daghistán, Mr. Zaremba, of the Shoosha mission, once visited two of the synagogues of the Jews in the village near Kooba, on the day of their Sabbath. In one of them the exercises were opened by an address from a learned Rabbi of Jerusalem, in Rabbinic Hebrew, which was interpreted into their language. They were little interested, and after awhile began to disperse. Mr. Zaremba said to them, "Why do you leave? Ought you not to remain and attend the regular prayers?" They seemed to understand that he wished to address them, and called out to him to speak, if he had any thing to communicate. He began by expressing to them his attachment, and that of all Christians, to the Old Testament which they received, as well as his high veneration for Abraham and the other Patriarchs, their ancestors; and then out of those same Scriptures he preached unto them Jesus. They listened with attention and interest, and at the close invited him to their houses to hear from him farther concerning the faith in Christ. In other places, also, Mr. Zaremba has had interviews both with Rabbies and the common people, and has found the latter especially disposed to hear him favourably.

After a ride of four fúrsakhs, we reached Khoik, the first village on our road, at half-past 1 P.M. Its high walls flanked with towers, made us, at first sight, hope to find in it the accommodations of a large village for the Sabbath. But a nearer approach shewed that its walls were mere ruins, and on entering it we found only about twenty squalid mud cabins, all inhabited by moslems.

We had bid farewell to underground houses on entering the valley of the Aras, but the custom of lodging in stables still prevailed. And on stopping at the door of the head man, we were directed to one of them for our accommodations. Antonio being sent to reconnoitre, pronounced the *otúkh*, or part appropriated to travellers, uninhabitable, and we petitioned for a room in the house.



The owner, having received a hint from our muleteers that we were English, and not the people to make a noise about a copper, sent word from a distance, that one was at our service; but his women met us at the door, and refused admittance. The old man soon appeared, and, with a stentorian voice, unequalled for harshness, clearing the way, seized my horse's bridle, and cried, in the same tone that had extorted obedience from his harem, *dûsh* (dismount, literally *fall*), asking if we thought he would let strangers go away from his door in want of a night's lodging!

The house, apparently the best in the village, was built throughout, floor, walls, and terrace, of mud. Fortunately, as its owner had two wives, it had two rooms. The one assigned us, being the principal family apartment, was, of course, filled with every species of dirt, vermin, and litter; and withal, as they were in the midst of the process of baking, the insufferable smoke of the dried cowdung which heated their *tannoor*, or cylindrical oven, detained us a long time before we could take possession. Persuaded at last by impatience, that the bread must be done, I entered, and found our host and chief muleteer shaking their shirts in the oven, to dislodge the "crawling creatures" that inhabited them. Though new to us then, we afterward found reason to believe that this use of the tannoor is common, and for it alone we have known it to be heated. In such ovens was our bread baked, by being stuck upon their sides, and though we would fain have quieted our fastidiousness by imagining that they were purified by fire, the nature of the fuel of which that was almost invariably made, left little room upon which to found such a conception. And as for the loathsome company of which our host and muleteer had thus attempted to rid themselves, we found them too constantly affecting our senses to think of imagining them away; for the traveller can hardly journey a day here, or in any part of Turkey, without their annoying him, and his only relief is in a constant change of his linen. The apartment was finally cleared and swept, but the old man could give us neither carpet nor mat, and our own painted canvass and travelling carpets were all that covered the ground on which we sat and slept.

The surrender of the best half of the house to a company of strangers, caused much derangement in the concerns of the family; and, crowded as the husband, his pair of wives, and a multitude of children were, into so close contact, some collision, of feeling at least, could not fail to result. The tones of the old man's voice,



however, which often thundered upon us from their apartment, possessed, perhaps, from frequent use for such purposes, a harshness admirably adapted to drown all domestic quarrels, and as they died away, were generally followed by the most perfect quiet. I ought to say, however, to the credit of his wives, that notwithstanding their unwelcome reception of us at first, they treated us, when once admitted to the family, with all motherly kindness; nor did they hesitate to appear in our room unveiled, and converse with us. In fact, little of moslem etiquette appeared in the regulations of the house, for the Christians, and even the Jew of our caravan, found ready admittance into any part of it. On our return, the youngest child, taking fright at Mr. Dwight's spectacles, set to crying so obstinately as to alarm the superstitious fears of the old ladies, lest bad consequences should result, probably from the evil eye, and they earnestly begged him to read a prayer over it from the Gospel, to break the charm! Whether the Armenian priests say prayers for children in such circumstances, I am unable to say; but this request seems to have referred to such a practice. I have seen it done in the Greek church.

The village is without a mosque, but has one mollah who teaches two or three children, and another, who, for acting as tax-gatherer, was execrated in no measured terms by our host. It is the property of Hassan Khan, the governor of the province, whose father, we were assured, some thirty years ago, seized upon it, and by an arbitrary act, converted its inhabitants, who had formerly been freeholders, into tenants. They pay, according to the information of our host, 35 per cent. of their produce to the proprietor, and a capitation tax of a ducat (about 2.25 dollars) to the emperor. None of the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages are now freeholders.

*Nov. 14.* At the first dawn of the Sabbath, we were awaked by the devotions of our host. Having performed the prescribed lustrations, he began at that hour to supplicate his God, in the same inharmonious tones with which he ruled his family. Their harshness indeed was not a little aggravated by a very distinct enunciation of the guttural sounds of the Arabic, the language of his devotions. His petitions were repeatedly interrupted by a reproof to his family, a direction to some child to drive his cattle down to the Aras to pasture, or some other order for the business of the day. The burden of them, of which, however, he understood nothing, was the mercy of God—that he neither begets nor is begot-



ten—praises to him—and remembrances of Mohammed and his family. Having extremely few words at command, his repetitions were more frequent than is usual with his brethren, and finally, working himself into an ecstasy, he repeated *ya Allah!* (Oh God!) twenty or thirty times successively, as fast as his tongue could articulate.

Our muleteer, having been brought up at the feet of some strict mollah, and obtained the title of *Meshedy*, by making a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Imám Riza at Meshed, was more accomplished and very regular in his devotions. He talked much about them, and often, when urged to do any thing, would say, Let me pray, and then it shall be attended to. They were frequently performed in our presence, and on one occasion we were forced to take some notice of them. At Selasíz, crowded as we were, he found a spot to spread his carpet and say his prayers in the midst of us, and did it probably with more formality, as an expression of his feelings at finding himself again in moslem society, after having been so long among Christians. A comb, which he always carried in a leathern bag suspended to his girdle, was placed on the extremity of his carpet before him, his beard smoothed down, and his limbs nicely adjusted, as a preparation. His prayer was uttered, sometimes audibly, and sometimes by merely moving his lips; and the evolutions of his body, always apparently the most essential part of a moslem's devotions, were performed standing, kneeling, and prostrate. One ceremony was added, which I do not remember to have seen performed by the súnnies; it was the combing of his beard, as an integral part of his devotions. He occasionally stopped to take a part in the conversation of the company, and at the end his friends passed many encomiums upon his performance.

How directly opposed is such worship to the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount! What heathen ever used more vain repetitions than these moslems? Surely no Jewish hypocrites were ever more public in their individual devotions. Not only do they pray standing in the bazárs and in the corners of the streets, but at Tebriz, in the open space “at the entering in of the gates of the city,” is a square platform erected for the special purpose of prayer. Subsequent observations and inquiries confirmed our first impressions, that the lower class of Persians are even more regular in the forms of worship than the Osmanlies, and that they are very sincere in their religion. Yet in their prayers, how can they be



sincere? for they know not their meaning. It is a singular feature of the whole region of Armenia, that every sect and nation inhabiting it, Armenians, Georgians, Nestorians, Turks, Persians, and Kürds, address God in an unknown tongue!

Sick at heart of these abominations of the false prophet, and wishing to retreat from our dirty den for meditation becoming this holy day, we walked into the fields to gaze upon Mount Ararat, and reflect upon the time when Noah, in this very valley, builded an altar unto the Lord, and offered that acceptable sacrifice of a sweet savour, which procured for himself and his posterity a divine title to the earth and its productions, and the solemn covenant, that "while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." We first saw that mountain the morning we entered Nakhcheván, and during the three weeks we were in the valley of the Aras, nothing but cloudy weather, during a few days, obscured it from our sight. It was nearer at any point between here and Eriván, but perhaps no where did we have a better view of it than from this place. The natives know it under no other name than *Másis* in Armenian, and *Aghur-dagh* (heavy mountain) in Turkish. The name of Ararat, by which it is called among Europeans, is applied in Scripture only to a *country*, which is in one instance called a kingdom.\* The similar name of *Ararád* was given by the Armenians long before they had received the Scripture account of the flood, by their conversion to Christianity, to the central, largest, and most fertile province of their country, the one which, with the doubtful exception of some 230 years, was the residence of their kings or governors from the commencement to the termination of their political existence, and nearly in the centre of which this mountain stands. The singular coincidence, considering the ease with which so distinguished a province might be named by foreigners for the kingdom itself, argues much for the identity of the Ararat of Scripture with the Ararád of Armenia.† It was on the mountains of Ararat that the ark rested after the flood; and certainly not among the mountains of Ararád, or of Armenia generally,

\* Gen. viii. 4; 2 Kings xix. 37; Is. xxxvii. 38; Jer. li. 27.

† The name of Armenia does not occur in the original of the Old Testament, unless we consider *Minni*, in Jerem. li. 27, as an abridgement of it. Saint-Martin, however, ingeniously suggests that *Miani* may refer to the Manavazians, a distinguished Armenian clan descended from Manavaz, a son of Haig, the capital of whose country was Manavazagérd, now Melazgérd. St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 249.







the Black Sea, a distance of seven days journey of a caravan, or about 130 miles in the circuitous route that would thus be taken. But might not a dove make this journey in a day? Or might not the climate then have been warmer than it is now? The second objection is drawn from the fact that some of the old versions and paraphrases, particularly the Chaldee and the Syriac, refer "the mountains of Ararat" to the mountains of Kùrdistán, where there is, not far from Jezeereh, a high mountain called Joody, on which the moslems suppose the ark to have rested.\* But if the ark rested on that, the posterity of Noah would, most likely, have descended at once into Mesopotamia, and have reached Shinar from the north; while, from the valley of the Aras, they would naturally have kept along on the eastern side of the mountains of Media, until they reached the neighbourhood of Hamadán or Kermansbáh, which is nearly east of Babylon.† Such is the route now taken every day by all the caravans from this region to Bagdád. The Armenians believe, not only that this is the mountain on which the ark rested after the flood, but that the ark still exists upon its top; though, rather from supernatural than from physical obstacles, no one has yet been able to visit it. A devout vartabéd, their legends relate, once attempted, for this purpose, to ascend the mountain. While yet far from the top, drowsiness came upon him, and he awoke at the bottom, in the very spot whence he had started. Another attempt resulted only in the same miraculous failure. He then betook himself more fervently to prayer, and started the third time. Again he slept, and awoke at the bottom; but now an angel stood before him with a fragment of the ark, as a token that his pious purpose was approved, and his prayer answered, though he could never be allowed to reach the summit of the mountain. The precious gift was thankfully received, and is to this day carefully preserved, as a sacred relic, in the convent of Echmiádzin.

*Nov. 15.* We started at sunrise, and as we hastened over the same undulating and gravelly tract, in a sharp frosty atmosphere, a sleeping fog gave the alluvial of the Aras below us the appearance of an extensive lake. It gradually broke up and vanished, and left in its place a more cheering scene of numerous villages and extensive cultivation. With the exception of one small hamlet, however, and a few fields of grain and cotton around it, we passed no houses or cultivation before reaching the Arpachai at 12 o'clock.

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 260,

† See Gen. xi. 2.





Three quarters of an hour beyond, we stopped at the large village of Ziveh-düdengeh, 4 fursakhs from Khoik.

In the Turkish nomenclature of rivers, *Arpa-chai* (barley river), and *Kara-soo* (black water), repeatedly occur, and indicate that the streams which bear the one or the other name respectively are usefully appropriated to purposes of irrigation, or pass on in their beds without contributing to fertilize the adjacent soil. The beautifully limpid water of this river, being scattered widely in artificial canals, gives extreme fertility to a broad tract, as it flows down to the Aras. It forms the present boundary between the provinces of Nakhcheván and Eriván, and in the ancient divisions of Armenia, was the eastern limit of the province of Ararád.\* The district which it waters is still called by its ancient name, Sharoor, though it is sometimes corrupted into Sheril. Besides its extreme fertility, it is well peopled, and presents an animated scene of about forty villages, some of which seem to be large.

The crops which we saw were rice and cotton. Rice was the most extensively cultivated. From the abundance of water furnished by the river it produces a large stalk, heavy ear, and full bright kernel, and yields from five to twenty fold. It was now harvested, and in an open space in front of the house where we stopped the villagers were slowly treading it out, like wheat, by driving around upon it four or five cattle abreast. In wandering about the village on our return, we found a mill for cleaning it. A machine resembling a corn-mill, except that a block or plank of wood supplied the place of the nether stone, first loosened a part of the husk. The process of winnowing separated that, and the remainder was removed by its being placed in piles upon the ground, and beaten by a large pointed instrument resembling the hammer of a forge. The whole, except the winnowing, was done by water, and the rice came out perfectly clean and but little broken. The cotton here was nearly twice as large as that which we had observed on approaching Nakhcheván, but yet would not compare at all in the height of the stalk, the size of the boll, or the length of the fibre, with the upland growth of our southern States. The peasants were now picking it for the last time. In every cotton field was another article of produce, which I must not omit to notice. After having been reduced to the necessity of burning butter for lights at Shaghád on the mountains, we were much sur-

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 108.



prised to find our lamps at Selasíz, the first village in the valley, supplied with oil. It proved to be castor-oil. And we afterward found that, wherever cotton is raised, whether in this valley or in Aderbaiján, the *palma Christi*, or castor-oil plant, is sowed with it, and its oil used for lamps. Where the soil or climate does not allow of these productions, tallow placed in an open lamp supplies, in villages, the place of oil. In cities it is made into regular candles.

The valley of the Aras is much narrower than that of the Koor. Of its comparative fertility we had little opportunity to judge, as our path rarely led us down to the alluvial which borders on the river. What we saw of it, however, and the extreme productiveness of the tracts watered by the two or three tributary streams that crossed our path, led us to think its fertility could hardly be exceeded. Yet in no case was any thing produced without constant irrigation, caused by conducting water, sometimes to a great distance, in artificial canals. Wherever a canal could not be made to reach, not only was no crop cultivated, but even grass seemed hardly to grow, and unsightly saline weeds covered with thorns, only added to the aspect of barrenness. If it be true, as some have imagined, that we are to look here for the site of Eden, surely in no part of the earth is the primeval curse more palpably inflicted than in the original paradise of Adam. No where is it more true that man "eats bread in the sweat of his face," and no where are "thorns and thistles" more spontaneously produced. The mountains around, instead of being covered with trees as in the Karabagh, or clothed with verdant pastures as at Erzroom, present nothing but forbidding precipices of rock or of earth, apparently without even a spire of grass. Their variegated colours, however, from white to fiery red, embracing in fact almost every shade of the rainbow, indicate that though so miserably poor in the vegetable, they may be rich in the mineral kingdom. The whole scene of valley and mountain presents not a tree, except in the immediate vicinity of the villages. Their mud houses are frequently half concealed in the foliage of fruit trees. Another of their features, also, not less unseemly than this was ornamental, deserves to be noticed. The cow-dung, which had been prepared for fuel during the warm months, was now piled in conical stacks at every door, and formed, by their height and number, wherever we went, a more prominent object than the houses themselves.



The compound name of Ziveh-düdengeh indicates, what we learned to be a fact, that it is composed of two villages. It contains in all about 100 houses, inhabited entirely, like almost, if not quite, every village in Sharoor, by moslems, and has one mosk and three or four mollahs, one of whom teaches ten or a dozen children. The other villages in the district are similarly furnished with the means of education, but they have no central school of a higher order.

*Nov. 16.* We arose at the earliest dawn, and started at half-past 6 A.M. The summit of Ararat was whitened with the broad light of day, while the obscurity of night still darkened its base; the first rays of the sun soon crowned it with gold; then gradually descending, spread over it to its base a robe of similar brilliancy; and finally shooting across the plain, cheered us with their warmth. The tract, fertilized by the Arpa-chai, is bounded in this direction by a range of rocky hills that shoot out from the mountains nearly to the banks of the Aras. We found a level pass through them at 9 o'clock, and entered upon a tract beyond as barren as that we had left was fertile. With the exception of a small space watered by a rivulet coming down from a valley at the foot of the mountain on the right, and ploughed for a scanty crop of grain, we observed no cultivation the whole day. Not a small portion of the plain was incrustated and whitened by a layer of nitre. A ride of 6 fúrsakhs brought us to the Armenian village of Dawaly at half-past 2 P.M.

Our Mohammedan muleteers first inquired in vain for lodgings in Turkish. The question was then put by one of our attendants in Armenian, and a little boy, starting up with an animated countenance, exclaimed, "Are you Armenians? Follow me, and I'll see if father can't give you a room." We were soon furnished with unusually good stable accommodations. Our little friend, and a brother or two of nearly the same size, listened with much eagerness to our conversation in the course of the evening respecting education, and at the end preferred an earnest request that we would come and establish a school for them, complaining sadly that their priests took no pains with them. They were the only Armenians in the country, young or old, so far as I recollect, that exhibited to us any desire for education. We were much amused, on our return from Eriván, by their bringing a serious charge against Antonio of not being a Christian, because he had been so



heterodox as to kill a fowl with its head to the west. The Armenian practice in these parts, it appeared, is to turn the head of whatever animal they slay toward the east, and make over it the sign of the cross in the name of the Trinity. Their church, like the Greek, holding the apostolical command, to abstain "from things strangled and from blood," to be still binding, most strictly orders that the jugular vein of all animals intended for food shall be cut. Consequently a strangled fowl is held in utter abomination, nor will they eat even any kind of game that is shot, unless its throat is cut before it expires. Mohammedans, too, not less carefully abstain from whatever has died in its blood, and also make a religious ceremony of the simple business of killing a fowl, by cutting off its head "in the name of God most merciful."

Dawaly contains about 100 families, all of whom emigrated from Magoo at the close of the last war. Their houses and manner of life indicated flourishing circumstances, and large quantities of excellent wheat, which they were now winnowing upon their threshing floors around the village, proved the productiveness of their lands. It is the only crop they cultivate. Their soil belongs to the crown, but no taxes are yet demanded. They have one mud-walled church, with three priests, but no school. Very few are able to read, and not more than two or three can write. Magoo, from whence they came, is a district of the Persian province of Aderbaiján, on the southern side of the Aras nearly opposite Dawaly, having for its capital a town of the same name. It corresponds with the Armenian canton of Shavarshán or Ardoz, in which is the convent of Tateós Arakeál. Our host estimated the number who emigrated from it at 1000 families, including all the Armenian inhabitants of the villages. In the town, also, not more than 50 Armenian families remain; the rest of its present population consists of about 150 moslem families, of whom nearly all are Kürds. The Armenians had not a school in the whole district.

Among the people at Dawaly numbers wore the Osmanly dress of turban and shalwár. We found that they were Kürds. I have already alluded to that people as forming a part of the population of Kara-bagh. They inhabit two mountainous districts, one of which separates that province from Eriván, and is not far from this village; and the other lies in the same range of mountains to the south of where we crossed them on our way from Shoosha to Nakhcheván. The number in the former district was stated to us



at 1500, and in the latter at 1700 families; but the estimate is probably too large. Many Armenian villages are scattered among them. They live a nomadic life, and in the winter migrate to the warm valley of the Aras, much as their pastoral neighbours of the Turkish language do to that of the Koor, and spend the cold months in tents, or in apartments furnished them by the villagers. Many were lodged in this village, and one or two families occupied another part of the same suite of stables in which we were accommodated. Like their countrymen every where, they are robbers by nature, but the Russian police makes them harmless citizens. They are ignorant in the extreme, and their attachment to the moslem faith is more bigoted than that of their neighbours. The missionaries at Shoosha once, in a visit to two or three of their villages, found them so easily exasperated by a few words against Mohammed, as to have been ready, but for fear of the Russians, to proceed to open violence.

Nov. 17. Our day's ride to Ardisher was 4 fúrsakhs, across a plain as little cultivated, and almost as barren as that of yesterday. From it, at some distance to the left, appeared the convent of Khor-viráb, on a rocky eminence rising out of the alluvial of the river. It derives its name, which signifies *a deep pit*, from the celebrated cave within its precincts, in which, according to the legendary history of Armenia, St. Gregory Loosavorích was confined by king Durtád for fourteen years, in the midst of serpents, and in the endurance of multiplied torments\*; and from which the conversion of the king and the whole nation to Christianity, by means of his sanctity and miraculous powers, alone released him. The Armenians regard it with the most superstitious veneration, and it is hardly less an object of pilgrimage than Echmiádzin. In explaining its sanctity to Antonio, some Armenian fellow-travellers this morning advanced sentiments respecting the character of St. Gregory, which, being opposed by him, led to a storm of words that attracted our attention. One from Bayezeed asserted that he was a prophet; another from Maragha, that he was next to God; and a third from Kara-bagh, that he was actually divine! Antonio laughed at their ignorance, and said, that for aught he knew he might be a saint, but he was no more than a man, and much like the English and German missionaries, who, in our days, go to preach the gospel to the heathen. Provoked at his low ideas of

\* St. Mart. vol. 2, p. 419.



their great saint, and taking into consideration that he rejected fasting, by the effects of which they were probably themselves a little soured to-day, it being Wednesday, they agreed to stigmatize him with the epithet of heretic. You may suppose that they were unusually bigoted and ignorant, and perhaps they were, but we had already heard, at Shoosha, of a similar expression respecting the divine character of St. Gregory, and even Nerses Shnorháli seems to have attributed to him the most full prophetic rank. "Is a rite," he asks, "appointed by St. Gregory, at all inferior to those which owe their origin to the holy apostles?—[by him] who, in respect to insufferable torments endured for the name of Christ, heavenly power received from him, and the conversion of such a multitude to his worship, was not at all behind them!"\*

We visited Khor-viráb on our return from Eriván. It is about two hours from Ardisher. No bishop resides in it; and of the three vartabéds who do, only one was on the ground. The church is the principal building, and, though smaller, is in the same style and taste as that of Datev. Being built of fine rose-coloured freestone, regularly hewn within and without, it was neat as well as solid. The old vartabéd affirmed, that it was built in the life-time of St. Gregory, by his grandsons. We were not slow to inquire for the sacred pit. A little chapel has been erected over it in a corner of the quadrangular court-yard of the convent. Taking each a lighted taper from the altar, we entered a small door beneath it, and descending a perpendicular shaft, reached the bottom of the pit by a ladder perhaps 30 feet long. It is circular, 15 or 20 feet in diameter, walled up artificially with stone, and covered with a dome. Antonio was disappointed to find the horrible pit look so comfortable, and accustomed, at the distance of Smyrna, to hear that the saint was fed by angels in his confinement, was not a little surprised to be directed by our guide to a small crevice in the dome, through which his daily loaf of bread was conveyed to him by a charitable old woman.

The position of Khor-viráb helps materially to fix the site of the ancient Ardashád (Artaxata), the city which boasted of Hannibal for its founder, and is so often mentioned by Greek and Roman writers as the capital of Armenia, during the first centuries of the Christian era. For, whether the legend that gave birth to the convent, be true or false, it had undoubtedly gained currency while

\* Unthanragán, p. 245.



the location of Ardashád was yet well known; and that the Khorviráb was in the citadel of that city, is an essential part of the story.\* Nor does the location disagree with that which is assigned by Armenian writers to Ardashád; which was at the junction of the Medzamor with the Aras.† The Medzamor was undoubtedly the river that now flows by Ardisher, as there is no other of any kind between the valley of the Zengy and Sharoor.‡ It enters the Aras but a little above Khorviráb; and the Aras flows along in plain sight, about half a mile distant. The rocky eminence, too, on which the convent stands, is the only spot adapted for a citadel, and the low soil around, being extremely moist, and in many places marshy, must render the spot, as was Ardashád, very unhealthy.§ We observed, however, no signs of former fortifications or edifices, and the vartabéd (who said that his convent stood within the precincts of that city) confessed that no ruins of it are now to be found.—We had from Khorviráb our nearest view of Mount Ararat. The limit of the Russian territory here is not the river, but the mountain. So that in Ararat centre the boundaries of the three empires of Russia, Turkey, and Persia.

Ardisher is inhabited by another colony of emigrants from the Persian territory. They came from the district of Salmás, and form a village of 91 houses, the newness of which is indicated by the entire absence of trees. It had no school. We were the guests of a melik, who seemed to be the head of the village, though not the proprietor of the soil, for that belonged to the crown. The title borne by him is often given by the Shah to Armenians in his realm, and though frequently hereditary, does not indicate any antiquity of family, much less a descent from the ancient nobility of the nation. It is itself perhaps no older than the time of Shah Abbas, who gave it to the Armenian magistrates appointed to preside over the colonists whom he carried to Isfahán.||

Within a few rods of Ardisher are the ruins of an ancient city, to the examination of which we devoted a part of our afternoon. Its citadel resembles an artificial hill surrounded by a wall and a ditch. The city itself had double walls, which are now nothing but large mounds of earth, inclosing an extensive tract with one or two small villages. In no part did we discover any traces of stone-

\* Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 15.

† Chamcheán, p. 2, c. 2. St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 117.

‡ St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 40.

§ See Moses Chóren. lib. 2, c. 46.

|| Chamcheán, p. 7, c. 9.



work, and the whole seems to have been built, in the modern style of the country, of mud. The name of the modern village might naturally be expected to afford a clue to that of the ancient city; but the only trace I find of such a name in these parts, is, that *Ardashád* was called in later times *Ardashá*.\* The location forbids us to suppose that city to have been here. We were inclined to think that they are the ruins of *Tovin*, a city which, from its foundation in A.D. 350 to A.D. 859, was the capital of the country, and the name of which frequently occurs in history, especially during the reign of the Persian and Arabian governors. It was situated to the north of *Ardashád*, in a more healthy spot, on the river *Azad* or *Medzamor*, and its name signified a hill.† A river, which must be the same, now comes down from the mountains here, and fertilizes a broad tract; and though it is so distributed into small canals for purposes of irrigation, that the main bed cannot be distinguished, one of the branches passes directly by the ruined walls.

*Nov. 18.* Our lodgings the last night, though not entirely separated from the stable, were sufficiently elevated to be but little affected by it; decent Persian felts covered the floor; and all looked so comfortable, that we began, on entering them, even to meditate upon the advantages of a stable, as a lodging place for travellers. But as evening came on, several other parties were introduced into the same room, and quite filled it. The greatest disadvantage, perhaps, of a crowded sleeping room, is, that its inmates can never agree to cease talking, and go to sleep, at the same time. Our companions to-night, however, were so uncommonly taciturn over their fasting supper of dry bread and raw onions, that we still lay down with the hope of undisturbed repose. But midnight was hardly passed, when the scene entirely changed, and animated conversation interrupted our slumbers. A table, loaded with joints of meat and other substantial provisions, which each had brought in his saddle-bags from home, was spread upon the centre of the floor; and the canonical hours of the fast being now over, nearly the whole company were indulging heartily in its good cheer, little caring that they kept us heretics awake till near morning. One of our fellow-travellers, who had been the most forward, in the early part of the day, to charge *Antonio* with heresy, for not fasting, ate with apparently the best relish, and talked the loudest. Such facts

\* *St. Mart.* vol. 1, p. 119.

† *Ibid.*



tended to shew us, what we were assured by different individuals is true, that the fasts are universally considered a burden, and kept, not from the heart, and in a spiritual manner, but because they are commanded; that the mere external act is generally regarded as in some way meritorious to cancel sin; and that they decidedly contribute to promote a self-righteous and censorious spirit.

We started at half-past 7 A.M. In crossing the tract irrigated by the river already mentioned, a new species of plough attracted our notice. The end of its beam rested upon an axle supported by two wheels, one of which, being designed to run in the furrow, was so much larger than the other, as to preserve the horizontal level. A boy rode upon each yoke, and cheered himself or the cattle by a song. Uncultivated and barren hills separate this district from the valley of Eriván. In crossing them we met numerous caravans of cattle. Though the sight had now become familiar, I have hardly yet mentioned it. Throughout the valleys of the Koor and the Aras, and in Aderbaiján, the ox is universally used as a beast of burden. A pack-saddle is fitted to his back, and he is driven in caravans like the horse, with almost as heavy a burden. Nothing is more common than to see a man riding upon an ox.

We entered Eriván a little after mid-day, and drove to the Georgian caravanserai, with the hope that, being the largest in the city, it might afford us tolerable lodgings. To our surprise, not a key could be turned for us, without orders from the police. Having a letter for the governor of the province of Armenia, from the governor of the Mussulman Provinces, whom we had met at Shoosha, we sent it immediately, with our passports, and a petition that we might have where to lay our heads. But the governor was absent, and the police office was closed for the Russian siesta, which, in these provinces, suspends all intercourse with official characters, from 12 to about 4 o'clock every day. There was no remedy, and throwing our baggage upon the ground in the open court, we summoned all the patience at our command, to wait till we could be attended to. Near sunset, a little room was finally opened. It was a complete prisoner's cell, with naked stone walls covered by a solid arch, and a floor of earth having so many hillocks and stones in its surface, that with only bare carpets for beds, we found much difficulty in adjusting our bones to its inequalities.—As we left for Echmiádzin the morning after our arrival, and on our return had



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our observations limited by my ague and fever, you must expect but a poor account of the place.

Eriván seems to have been first fortified and raised into importance, in the earlier reigns of the Sofian dynasty; and, though occasionally taken by the Osmanlies, it has from that period been considered the chief place in the Persian division of Armenia. Under the present dynasty, it was the residence of a governor with the title of *serdár*, who, for his power, and the importance of his territories, ranked among the highest officers of Persia, until it fell, during the last war, into the hands of the Russian emperor. By him it has been made the capital of the province of Armenia, which we found governed by an Armenian with the title of prince, and the rank of a general in the army. It is situated at a distance of many miles from the Aras, in a broken valley, through which flows the river Zengy, the outlet of the lake of Seván (called in Turkish, *Gökcheh derya*, or Azure Sea). Surrounded on the north by arid and sun-burnt mountains which concentrate the rays of the sun, its situation is in the summer extremely hot, and proverbial for intermittent fevers, and the affections of the liver that accompany them. But sickness has here its usual attendant of fertility. Eriván is not less proverbial for its fruits, than for its diseases. Though we had found neither vineyards nor wine since leaving Nakhcheván, all the sunny hills which compose the valley around this city, were covered with vines. Some situations are so warm, as to allow them to remain exposed to the air the whole winter, but generally they were now slightly covered with leaves or straw. Among the fruits in the bazar (which were the same as at Nakhcheván) melons and apples were uncommonly fine, and the latter, unless my taste had become corrupted by the miserable specimens which the Mediterranean affords, would even compare with the productions of American orchards.

The citadel is separate from the city, at the distance of perhaps a quarter of a mile to the south, and is almost a distinct town. Surrounded by merely a mud wall and a trench, on ground sloping but slightly away from it, it presents to the spectator from the east, an appearance of little strength. But its western wall, standing on the brink of the river Zengy, which here flows through a remarkable chasm formed of high perpendicular ledges on either side, seems perfectly impregnable. The city itself is without walls, and though superior to Nakhcheván in the size and structure of its



houses, has still an appearance of decay. Connected with our caravanserai was a large and apparently new bazár, consisting of two streets of shops crossing each other at right angles, arched over in the usual style, with a succession of domes, and built of brick. But not even there was there sufficient business doing to remove the impression made by our decayed caravanserai, that the trade of the place is in a languishing condition.

We met at Echmiádzin the bishop of Eriván, who is little more than a suffragan or chorepiscopus of the Catholicos. He informed us that the province of Eriván now contains 14,200 families of Armenians, and 8000 of moslems, inhabiting 502 villages. Whereas before the war, there were but 302 villages, and the number of families did not exceed 12,000 in all. The population of the city is said to be about 1800 moslem, and 700 Armenian families.\* We were prevented by ill health from visiting either the school in town, or that in the neighbouring village of Ashterák.—There are now no relics of the branch of the Jesuit mission of Isfabán, which was established here in 1683, for the express purpose of converting the Catholicos to the faith of Rome.† No papal Armenians are found in the province.

*Nov. 19.* We left Eriván at half-past 11 A.M. for Echmiádzin. Descending into the valley of the Zengy beneath the walls of the citadel, we crossed its transparent stream by a stone bridge. Cultivation, particularly of the vine, extended perhaps a mile beyond; and then, nothing but an undulating, uncultivated, and gravelly soil succeeded, till we reached the convent; a distance of at least 12 miles from the city, in the direction of Erzroom.

\* I am indebted for this estimate of the population of the city to an article in the Asiatic Journal, by Klaproth, vol. 6, p. 108.

† Lett. Ed. et Cur. vol. 3, p. 421.

## LETTER XV.

## ECHMIADZIN.

St. Hripsime—Vagharshabád—Description of the convent—Our reception by the monks—  
The church—Ceremony of the mass—Doctrine of the mass—Communion—Confession—  
Pilgrimages—Accommodations of the vartabéds.

DEAR SIR,

THE ecclesiastical capital of the Armenians is called by the Turks, *Uch-keleeseh*, or the three churches; the number that actually first strikes the view of the traveller approaching from Eri-ván. Two of them are without the precincts of the convent, and of small dimensions. They are dedicated to the two virgins Hripsime and Kayane, who, with thirty-seven others, are reported by Armenian tradition to have fled from a nunnery at Rome, during the persecution under Diocletian, to Armenia; where Durtád, then a heathen, and the creature of Diocletian, martyred them, on the spots now occupied by their churches.\* Though Kayane was the abbess, Hripsime being of the imperial family of Claudius Cæsar, has been most honoured by posterity, in the size of her church, and the veneration of her relics. Her church, which is said to have been founded by St. Gregory Loosavorích, but has been often demolished and rebuilt since, stands just on the right of the road, perhaps half a mile before reaching the convent, and is a solidly built structure of hewn stone, bearing an appearance of much antiquity. The urn containing her relics, first deposited under the signet of St. Gregory, and afterward sealed also by Isaac the Great, and the Catholicos Abraham, was, in the seventeenth century, pilfered by two Latin monks. All was recovered, however, by the bereaved monks of Echmiádzin, except four parts; one of which is now adored in the Armenian church at Venice, another is treasured up by the Latin friars at Goa, in Hindostán, a third lies deposited under the foundations of a church near Nakhcheván, and the fourth, after remaining long at New Joolfah, found its way at last, through

\* The only other members of this celebrated sisterhood, whose names tradition seems to have preserved, were Nooni and Mani. They separated from the others. Nooni was the female captive that converted the Georgians to the faith, and Mani suffered martyrdom at Kemákhi, in High Armenia. See Mukhitár's Arm. Dict. and Mos. Choren. lib. 2, c. 83.



the hands of a pearl merchant of Bagdad, into a church in Galata of Constantinople.\*

Between the church of St. Hripsime and the convent, and just without the walls of the latter, is the village of Vagharshabád, once the royal, as the adjoining monastery now is the patriarchal, capital of the country. It existed many centuries under the name of Vartkés, but was rebuilt in the second century, and called Vagharshabád, or the city of Vaghársh, by a king of that name, and became for more than a century the residence of his successors.† It presents nothing but a crowded collection of mud cabins, perhaps 500 in number; and the royal city of Vaghársh is now the exclusive property of the successors of St. Gregory.

The convent derives its name from the church which it incloses, and in the supposed sanctity of which it had its origin. *Echmiádzin* is an Armenian sentence, which means, *the Only Begotten descended*, and the church is so called, in commemoration of a pretended appearance of the Saviour to St. Gregory Loosavorích, upon the spot where it is built. It claims to have been founded by the saint himself, more than 1500 years ago, and local legend even pretends that the original structure was built on a model shewed him in the heavenly vision. What order the supernatural architecture assumed, however, we have not now an opportunity to know, for we are told, that, having gone to ruins, it was restored and greatly improved by a subsequent Catholicos, in A.D. 618. Though always highly venerated, it did not become the seat of the Catholicoses until A.D. 1441, when Armenia Proper seceded from the jurisdiction of the see of Sis. Since then it has ever remained the ecclesiastical metropolis of the nation.‡

The whole of the premises are surrounded by a high wall flanked with circular towers, and have externally the appearance of a fortress. Within, is a city in miniature. The principal edifices, of different ages and styles, and containing the cells of the monks, magazines, refectories, and various other apartments, surround a quadrangle about two hundred and twenty feet square, in the centre of which stands the church. From hence a gate on the south opens into an extensive yard, with barns and stables around it for horses and other animals, among which a number of camels were

\* Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 15, 24; p. 4, c. 17; p. 7, c. 9.

† Chamcheán, p. 1, c. 5; p. 3, c. 13. St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 115.

‡ St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 116. Chamcheán, p. 4, c. 17; p. 7, c. 3.

kneeling when we entered. Another passage on the same side leads into an open court, surrounded by a continuous building of two stories, like a caravanserai, designed apparently for the accommodation of pilgrims. Two other passages open on the northern side. One is a private entry to a garden of considerable extent, surrounded on two sides by buildings, and considered the peculiar premises of the Catholicos. It has an air of retirement and comfort. The other conducts to the main gate in the eastern wall of the convent, through a bazar of forty or fifty shops, which being within its walls, seems to form an integral part of the establishment.

We arrived with a letter from Serope, the present bishop of Astrakhán, to the Catholicos, and another to his secretary from the bishop of Aderbaiján. They were sent forward by Antonio, and the Catholicos immediately ordered the best room for our accommodation. The vartabéd, however, who, as master of ceremonies, was to execute the order, declared that the room was to be occupied by prince Bebutoff, the governor of the province, and his lady, who were expected in the evening, and another was given us in the back suite of apartments designed for pilgrims. It was good and honourable enough, perhaps, but its position was lonely, and seemed completely to exclude us from whatever was going on among the inmates of the convent. The evening of our arrival being Friday, Antonio, probably more from a regard to his own appetite than ours, intimated to the servant who was appointed to attend upon us, that meat would be very acceptable for dinner. But the convent, we were assured, contained that day none but fasting food, and so we satisfied our hunger with boiled beans, and peas, and onions. Besides being incommoded by a diet so unfit for a stomach weakened by disease, we remembered what hospitality had done at Datev, and feared that this strictness was an indication that we were to find none of it here. The morning confirmed our suspicions. Every monk whom we met wore a sombre aspect, and passed us without a salutation. Antonio was told by one and another, that we were of the same school with the missionaries at Shoosha, who had come into these parts to convert the Armenians, and that he did wrong to connect himself with us, being thus in danger of imbibing our sentiments. In fact, non-intercourse seemed to be determined upon. Our food was sent to our room by a servant, and no vartabéd called on us. The Catholicos did not invite





us to wait upon him; of his secretary we heard nothing; and repeated overtures on our part, to obtain interviews with them and with others, were under various pretences frustrated.

The time of our visit to Echmiádzin, was, in one respect, peculiarly fortunate, for we were there during some of its most splendid ceremonies. The governor, himself an Armenian holding the rank of prince and a general, arrived, as was expected, on Friday evening, in company with his lady; and on Saturday morning a mass was celebrated with great pomp for him to attend. The church itself added to the imposing ceremony, by its venerable structure. The main body of it, substantially built of hewn stone in the form of a cross, is surmounted by a dome in the best style of the cylindrical-conical order already described. Its belfry, an antique tower, terminated in several pyramidal turrets, and loaded with bells, rests upon massive square columns, which form the porch to the main entrance at the western extremity. Within, four enormous pillars descending from the circumference of the dome, uphold it with all the lofty walls which support the roof. Portraits of saints, and sketches of Scripture and legendary events, cover its walls, and by their grotesque design, and clumsy execution, contribute to deepen the impression of the monkish scene. One venerable father stands forth in perfect nudity, except that a monstrous beard, extending to the ground, performs one of the most necessary uses of dress. Numerous silver lamps, and a few glass chandeliers suspended from above, were on this occasion all lighted. More than half of the floor from the altar to the porch is enclosed by a railing, for the special use of the clerical attendants, and was covered with carpets, some of which surpassed description in elegance and richness. The principal altar occupies a high elevation in a lofty alcove, or sanctuary, at the eastern extremity, and groaned under massive gold crosses, silver candlesticks, and many other not less costly ornaments. Two sanctuaries of smaller dimensions are furnished with altars on either side of it, and one of them served this morning for a sacristy. In the middle of each of the side walls, too, is another sanctuary or chapel, and still another small one occupies an isolated position in the middle of the floor, directly under the centre of the dome. The latter was surrounded by curtains of gold cloth of different patterns, and far surpassed every other part, in the exquisite finish, and superlative richness of its furniture and ornaments. It is probably built upon the stone, respecting which Chardin reports



a tradition of the Armenians, that it covers the hole where Christ, when he appeared to Loosavorich, thrust down to hell the evil spirits which formerly dwelt in the idol temples of Armenia.\* In a word, the display of wealth this morning, in candlesticks, crosses, curtains, carpets, and dresses, seemed to me not surpassed even by that which is made at the celebration of high mass in the church of St. John at Malta. The protestant Chardin, and the papal Tourneforte, unite in testifying, that much of this wealth has come from the pope in the form of bribes for the conversion of the Catholicos; and now remains a monument of the credulity of the one, and the deception of the other.†

The dressing of the officiating bishop was the first important part of the mass, and a distinct prayer or meditation is said for every article of dress put on. But the ceremony being private, we witnessed only the chanting which was performed at the same time in the church. He then entered in a splendid flowing mantle of heavy gold cloth, with a broad upright collar stiff with gold, and a mitre of the same rich materials, ornamented in front and behind with a sun of brilliants set in gold. Having washed his hands before all, read a summary confession of his sins, and received absolution pronounced by an assistant, he retired again to the sacristy to prepare the wine and the bread for consecration. A little wine, not mixed with water, as in the Latin church, is poured into a chalice; and a thin cake of bread, not leavened, as in the Greek church, and stamped with various sacred symbols and letters, is placed on a small silver plate nicely fitted to the top of the cup. Each part of the ceremony has its appropriate prayer with the burning of incense, but a curtain, drawn before the sacristy, veiled the whole from our view. The time taken up was long, and during it the congregation were entertained by nothing but the monotonous chanting of a large company of deacons and clerks.

At length the bishop, leaving the elements behind, came forward with a pompous procession, and the burning of incense, and proceeded in a circuitous course through the congregation to the great altar. After a series of prayers, a deacon read the lesson of the day from the Gospel and the Nicene creed‡; and then, with the

\* Chardin, vol. 1, p. 175.

† Chardin, vol. 2, p. 173. Tournefort, vol. 2, p. 333.

‡ Bishop Dionysius assures me that the Armenians do not use either the Apostles' or the Athanasian creed in their church services. The following is a literal translation of their version of the Nicene creed.



whole body of assistants, went for the elements. They were brought carefully veiled, accompanied by several pictures, and followed by a procession. The bishop, whose mitre had in the mean time been removed by an assistant, took them, and prayed; "Accept this offering from us, and perfect it for the mystery of the body and blood of thine only begotten Son; grant that this bread and this cup may be a means of the remission of sin to those who taste." The congregation being in the mean time exhorted to salute and kiss each other for the appearance of Christ, a deacon, taking the salutation from the bishop, went and saluted the Catholicos, and from him the ceremony passed through the whole congregation, each one bowing this way and that over the other's shoulder, as if to kiss him.

The consecration followed. In performing it the bishop *blessed* the bread by making over it the sign of the cross, *gave thanks* by looking upward, *brake it* by picking out a crumb, and repeating the transubstantiating words "*take, eat, this is my body,*" lifting it at the same time above his head for the congregation to worship, instead of giving it to them to eat. The ceremony for the wine was similar. The whole was performed privately, with the back of the officiator toward the congregation, and not a word or a sign intended for them to hear or see, except the elevation of the elements. Prayers for the efficacy of the mass to be applied to the communicants, to all believers, whether living or dead, and especially to any for whom a particular remembrance had been requested, followed. Then the bishop, having first dipped the bread in the wine, took it between the thumb and fore-finger of each hand, and holding the cup also between the palms of his hands,

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, of things visible and invisible.

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; of God the Father, *i. e.* of the Father's substance, the only begotten; God of God; Light of Light; very God of very God; begotten, not created; consubstantial with the Father; by whom was created every thing in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible; who for us men, and for our salvation, descending from heaven, became incarnate, was made man, was perfectly born of the holy virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost, whereby he received body, spirit, and mind, and whatever is in man, really and not in imagination. He suffered, was crucified, and buried; and on the third day he arose; and with that same body ascended to heaven, and sat down on the right hand of the Father: with that same body and the Father's glory he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

"And we believe in the Holy Ghost, the uncreated, the perfect. Who spake in the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels. Who descended at Jordan, preached of him that is sent, and dwelt in the saints. And we believe in one only Catholic and Apostolic church; in one baptism for repentance, forgiveness, and remission of sins; in the resurrection of the dead, and the eternal judgment to soul and body; in the Kingdom of Heaven, and the life everlasting." See Jamakirk.

turned to the congregation, and cried, "Holy, holy, let us with holiness taste of the honoured body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which descending from heaven, is divided among us. This is life, hope, resurrection, propitiation and remission of sins." Turning, he replaced the elements upon the altar, and a splendid curtain, large enough to veil the whole front of the sanctuary, being drawn, prevented us from witnessing what followed, except the chanting of the assistants in a semi-circle before the altar. But, according to the canon, he had first to break the bread into four parts, and kiss it with weeping; and then, after sundry prayers and supplications, to eat the bread and drink the wine with fear and trembling; saying, "May thy incorruptible body be life unto me, and thy holy blood, a propitiation and remission of sins." The curtain being then withdrawn, a deacon cried, "Approach with fear and faith, and with holiness commune;" and as the bishop turned around with the elements, the clerks on the part of the people, cried, "Our God and our Lord has appeared unto us, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Eight or ten women came forward and communed; and bits of unconsecrated bread were distributed, as is customary also in the Greek church, among the rest of the congregation, as they dispersed.

The ceremony occupied an hour and forty minutes. The lesson from the gospel was read toward the congregation, and with tolerable distinctness, though in a chanting tone; and it was gratifying to notice the marked stillness which, as is always the case during this part of the service, prevailed among the audience. Now and then, too, a sentence from a deacon was addressed to them, and the bishop frequently turned round to wave a little silver cross, and cry, "Peace be with you." But most of the prayers were private and said in an inaudible tone, and the others were often completely drowned by the chanting of a company of some twenty or thirty clerks straining their discordant voices to the highest pitch. To complete the confusion, four or five deacons standing on the right side of the altar accompanied the most important parts with the gingling of a quantity of small silver bells, attached to the circumference of circular plates upon the end of long sticks which they held in their hands, and large bells, suspended in the dome, repeatedly added their deafening intonations. Candles were lighted and extinguished at the proper moment, and the use of the censer,



both at the altar and among the audience, was liberal. The whole bore no slight resemblance to a theatrical pantomime, and was evidently calculated not to be united in as a devotional service, but to be gazed at and worshipped. In fact, during every part, the more devout of the assembly frequently prostrated themselves and kissed the ground, with many signs of the cross; and when the elements were formally held up before them after the consecration, the most profound and idolatrous adoration was exhibited by nearly all, some with their foreheads to the ground, and others kneeling with their hands suppliantly extended, their eyes directed to the adored object, and their countenances marked with an aspect of most earnest entreaty. It seemed, in a word, more objectionable in every feature than any papal mass I ever witnessed.—After remaining some time unnoticed among the crowd, we were invited within the railing among the vartabéds and the general's suite, and a vartabéd directed Antonio to ask me (Mr. Dwight being elsewhere engaged) to come and kiss the cross. He considered himself clothed with sufficient discretionary power, however, to give my refusal, and I was not troubled with the request.

With such pompous ceremonies does the Armenian church turn into a solemn farce the celebration of that simple ordinance, at the institution of which, “the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and, when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me; and after the same manner also the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” Nor is the doctrine of the church respecting its nature and object less erroneous. It believes, as fully as does the papal church, in the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ; and not only so, but with that church it also believes, that the human soul and the divinity of our Lord, as well as his body, are present in the elements. Thus, instead of being regarded as a simple memento of the atoning death of our Saviour, this sacrament is converted, contrary to every evidence of the senses and of reason, into a renewal of that death itself, and considered an actual propitiatory sacrifice of Christ for the living and the dead! Let the following extract from a prayer which follows the consecration testify to the extent of the efficacy that is ascribed to it. “May this [the elements of the mass] be for justification, propiti-



ation, and remission of sins to all of us who draw near. Through it grant love, stability, and desired peace to the whole world; to the holy church, and all orthodox bishops, priests, and deacons; to kings, the world, princes, and people; to travellers and seamen; to those who are bound, in danger, and in trouble; and to those who are fighting with barbarians. Through it, also, grant to the air mildness, to the fields fertility, and to them who are afflicted with divers diseases, speedy relief. Through it give rest to all who are already asleep in Christ, first parents, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, bishops, elders, deacons, and all the members of the holy church. With them also visit us, we pray thee, O thou beneficent God.\* Indeed, in the language already quoted respecting masses for the dead, "that which Christ offered, and that which the priests offer, is regarded as the same sacrifice."

How directly does this whole theory of the mass stand in the face of the apostle's argument, that Christ, unlike the daily sacrifices of the Jewish dispensation, after he had offered *one* sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right of God! (Heb. x.) By it the gospel is subverted, and the "weak and beggarly elements" of the old Jewish system of sacrifices are revived. The real death of Christ comes to be practically neglected, or regarded as little more than a simple antidote to original sin, and the forgiveness of actual sin is expected from the imagined sacrifice of the mass, the most absurd dogma that was ever palmed upon human credulity. It substitutes a priesthood to offer sacrifices, for a ministry to feed the flock of God with sound doctrine; it converts the spiritual worship of God into the formal adoration of a ceremony; it leads to idolatry. In a word, of all the heresies, absurdities, and abominations of the papal and oriental churches, the mass is the chief.

From this perversion of the design of the sacrament of the supper, and the consequent idea that to partake of the elements is not essential to its celebration, the neglect of communion has naturally followed. Although, in parishes which have a sufficient number of priests, mass is performed almost every day, it is customary for none except the officiators to communicate more than twice a year, the occasions usually selected being Christmas and Easter. The limit of frequent attendance upon communion, is seven times, and of rare attendance, once a year. Great efficacy,

\* See the Armenian Missal, called Khorhurtadedr.



however, is ascribed to the ceremony, and the consecrated elements are carried, as a viaticum, to the bedside of the dying, with the idea that to partake of them is essential to the future happiness of the soul. The communicants this morning stood up before the altar, and the bishop put a bit of the bread, which had been previously dipped in the wine, into the mouth of each. In this way only do the Armenians communicate in both kinds. The wine they never drink. One of the women had a child not more than a year old in her arms, and that also communicated; for infants, from the moment of baptism, are admissible to the table of the Lord.

The Armenian, like the papal and the Greek churches, practises close communion. It is indeed inconsistent with its admission of the possibility of salvation out of the church; and the inconsistency seemed to be felt by more than one intelligent ecclesiastic with whom we conversed. One contended that it was the duty of priests to admit members of other sects, without first confessing them; and affirmed that Russians, as they spoke only a foreign language, had been thus admitted in his convent, upon their declaring simply that they had already confessed. Another declared, that Armenians were allowed to commune with other sects, when in parts of the world where no Armenian church is found; and that foreigners are admissible to the Armenian communion upon their confessing and making a profession of their faith. This, however, is conceding nothing, for the act of confessing to an Armenian priest, is equivalent to becoming a member of that church, and it would be a strange sect that should refuse to admit proselytes. Should an Armenian, in ordinary circumstances, receive the sacrament of the supper from the hands of a protestant, or a minister of any other sect, he would be considered as cut off, by that act, from his church, and not admissible again to her bosom, without confessing his sin, and doing penance for it.

Confession is an indispensable preparation for the communion, and is now practised only immediately before it. The women who communicated this morning, had all confessed, during the first part of the mass, to a vartabéd in the western end of the church. He had no confessional, nor have we seen one in any Armenian church. Seated on the floor *a la Turque*, he caused each one successively to kneel by his side, with her head in his lap; and then, putting his hand upon her head, listened to her confession. In another instance, we have seen a confessor, in the presence of company, re-



clining upon his arm, with the woman he was confessing kneeling by his side, her head being upon his bosom, and his arm upon her person. The substance of the confession is more objectionable than the position of the parties. A prescribed form, the same that follows the creed already quoted, at the commencement of morning prayers in the church, is in every case repeated *memoriter*, or from the mouth of the confessor. A regard to decency forbids its publication entire. With a few expressions omitted, and the indelicacy of others somewhat modified in giving it an English dress, it is as follows:—

“ I have sinned against the most holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and I confess before God, and the holy mother of God, and before thee, holy father, all the sins I have committed. For I have sinned in thought, in word, and in deed; voluntarily, and involuntarily; knowingly, and ignorantly. I have sinned against God.—I have sinned with my spirit and its faculties; with my mind and its acts; with my body and its senses. I have sinned with the faculties of my spirit; by cunning, and by folly; by audacity, and by cowardice; by prodigality, and by avarice; by dissipation, and by injustice; by love of evil, by desperation, and by mistrust. I have sinned against God.—I have sinned with the evil devices of my mind: by artifice, by malice, by vindictiveness, by envy, by jealousy, by dissoluteness, by unchaste propensities, \*\*\*\*\* and by abominable filthiness of imagination. I have sinned against God.—I have sinned with the lusts of my body: by sensuality, by sloth, by the yawning of sleep; by the acts of the body, and by the commission of divers kinds of impurity; by the licentious hearing of my ears, by the shamelessness of my eyes, by the lusts of my heart, \*\*\* by the lasciviousness of my mouth, by incontinence, by gluttony, and by drunkenness. I have sinned against God.—I have sinned with the evil speaking of my tongue; by lying, by false swearing, by perjury, by contentiousness, by disputing, by defamation, by flattery, by tale-bearing, by idleness, by mockery, by vain conversation, by talking heresy, by cursing, murmuring, complaining, backbiting, and blaspheming. I have sinned against God.—I have sinned with every joint of my frame, and every member of my body: with my seven senses, and my six operations; by kicking upward, by dangling downward, by straying to the right and to the left, by sinning against what is before, and being a bad example to what is behind.—I have sinned



against God.—I have also sinned by [committing] the seven transgressions, the mortal sins : by pride and its varieties ; by envy and its varieties ; by anger and its varieties ; by sloth and its varieties ; by covetousness and its varieties ; by gluttony and its varieties ; by lasciviousness and its varieties. I have also sinned against all the commands of God, both the positive and the negative ; for I have neither done what is commanded, nor abstained from what is forbidden. I have received the law, and have come short of it. I have been invited to the rights of Christianity, and by my conduct have been found unworthy ; knowing the evil, I have voluntarily debased myself, and of myself have departed from good works. Ah me ! ah me ! ah me ! which shall I tell ? or which shall I confess ? For my transgressions cannot be numbered, my iniquities cannot be told ; my pains are irremissible, my wounds are incurable. I have sinned against God.—Holy father, I have thee for an intercessor, and a mediator of reconciliation with the only begotten Son of God ; that by the power given unto thee thou wouldest loose me from the bonds of my sins, thee I supplicate.”\*

Such are the sins that every Armenian, male and female, young and old, acknowledges in the ear of his priest at confession, and hears confessed for him every morning that he attends church : sins, some of which would otherwise hardly enter the imagination, but which being thus suggested, doubtless soon become so familiar, that the acknowledgment of them is no longer a falsehood. The document is the nation’s own confession of its immoralities ; and, either as causes which occasioned it to be drawn up, or as effects resulting from its frequent rehearsal, the supposition is but reasonable, that those immoralities exist. The fact, however, that a large part of it is veiled by a dead language in an obscurity impenetrable to the common people, hides some of the darkest shades of the picture.†

\* Jamakirk, p. 6.

† Since the above was written, a papal friend has referred me to the Table of Sins inserted in the common prayer-books of his church, to aid the penitent in his preparation for confession, by suggesting to him what sins he needs to confess. Perhaps this Armenian form of confession was originally intended only for a similar purpose, and had a similar shape.—If any reader is disgusted that such an offensive document should be raked up from the dead language of Armenia to be set before him in this enlightened land, it may be well for him to know that one similarly offensive is in the hands of every devout papist among us, and may be found in the Roman Catholic book-store in Boston, and in similar places in our other cities. If he can do it with a pure heart, let him read the table of sins and the other directions for confession in the Christian’s Guide to Heaven, the Key of Paradise, and other popular Roman Catholic



Even after the rehearsal of such a long catalogue of extemporaneous confession of the particular sins that burden the conscience, is generally demanded by the confessor. In the cases that we witnessed this morning, however, no such demand was made; and the vartabéd pronounced the absolution upon each woman, as she finished repeating from his mouth what I have quoted above. The form of absolution is as follows:—"May a compassionate God have mercy upon thee. May he pardon all thy confessed and forgotten sins. And I, by right of my priestly authority, and the divine command, 'Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;' by that same word, do absolve thee from all connection with thy sins, of thought, of word, and of deed; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And I admit thee again to the sacraments of the holy church; and whatever good thou shalt do, may it be to thee for a good work, and in the future life for glory. Amen.\*" In these few words lies the whole secret of priestly power. Were they blotted out from the ritual of the church, the priesthood, like Samson shorn of his locks, would become weak, and be like any other men. The pretended power of loosing men from their sins, gives them the real power of binding upon their shoulders "heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne." It is firmly believed by the people generally, that when the priest pronounces this absolution, their sins are really forgiven. *Satisfaction*, the last of the three parts into which the doctors of Rome have divided the sacrament of penance†, and of which *confession* is the second, is also acknowledged and practised by the Armenian church, and will come under consideration hereafter. The first part, or *contrition* of heart for sin, it is to be feared, is rarely considered essential, and still more rarely felt.

The Armenians have uniformly declared, in answer to our inquiries, that in their church money is never paid at confession. And yet each of these women did certainly, before our eyes, put a piece of money into the hand of the vartabéd, either immediately

prayer-books, and reflect upon the corrupting tendency of auricular confession, especially when that confession is made by youth of either sex to an unmarried clergy. Particularly let every Protestant parent do this before putting his children into the hands of papists to be educated.

\* Jamakirk, p. 9.

† See that very valuable compendium of the doctrines of papacy, the Text-Book of Popery, by J. M. Cramp, p. 184—205.





before or after the absolution. The reason of it was, perhaps, that they were pilgrims, and the communion being the finishing act of their pilgrimage, they took this occasion to pay to the convent the contribution always expected from such visitors. Pilgrimages are in high repute among the Armenians, as a species of good works. The most meritorious are made to Jerusalem, to the convent of *Soorp Hovhannes Garabéd* (St. John the Forerunner) near Moosh, and to Echmiádzin. He who has acquired the title of *mukdesy* by visiting the former place, stands in the estimation of his countrymen far above the common standard of sanctity. These great pilgrimages, however, are not so common as formerly. Still, almost every convent, or other place, where a saint has died, or his relics are preserved, is visited more or less frequently for this superstitious purpose.

Having brought a letter from an Armenian friend at Smyrna, to one of the oldest bishops of the convent, we caused it to be presented to him on the afternoon of Saturday. It procured us an invitation to call on him, and an opportunity to see the accommodations of the highest members of the convent. He was sitting with the librarian and the bishop of Eriván, in a spacious and airy chamber, furnished with every thing that oriental custom considers necessary to comfort. A broad and well covered Turkish sofa occupied two sides of the room, a good carpet covered the floor, and a series of shelves above were ornamented with the various rich fruits of the country, for the gratification of the eye as well as the taste. Servants awaited his commands in an anti-chamber, and brought us the temperate refreshments usually offered to a visitor in Turkey. Every thing had an air of ease, if not of luxury, little corresponding with the ideas usually entertained of the cell of a monk, and confirming what we in other ways learned, that the leading inmates of this establishment, practise few of the self-denials for which their profession is reputed. His reception of us was friendly, and his answers to our questions unreserved. The information we derived from him, for the sake of better arrangement, is given elsewhere.

## LETTER XVI.

## ECHMIADZIN.

Festival of the Catholicos—His sacrifice—Origin of his title and see—His election—The present Catholicos—His duties and sources of income—Ordination of bishops—The meiron—The novirág—Power of the Catholicos—Interview with the vartabéds—Essential articles of faith—Conditions of salvation—Mode of baptism—Confirmation—Extreme unction—Conversation upon our own religious rites—Commencement of the Armenian Sabbath—Ideas of missions—Library of the convent—Character of the secretary of the Catholicos—Return to Nahkcheván.

DEAR SIR,

ON leaving the room of the bishop, mentioned at the close of my last letter, we found the monks, in their gayest clerical robes, paraded in double file along the pavement, which leads to the church-door from the entry to the apartments of the Catholicos. It appeared, on inquiry, that to-morrow was to be the twentieth anniversary festival of his inauguration, and that they were now about to conduct him in pomp to evening prayers, as the commencement of the ceremonies of the occasion. He soon came forward tottering with the decrepitude of age, and, leaning upon the arms of attendants, was led through their ranks. A gold cross only upon his cowl, and a staff, his badge of office, in his hand, distinguished him from the rest. Two attendants held a broad canopy of crimson over his head, and two or three deacons, going backward before him, perfumed him continually with incense. It was the pope of Armenia in festal show. The mass on Sabbath morning, which constituted the essential part of the festival, was, in some respects, more pompous than the one already described, and the dresses used being different, it served to exhibit more fully the wealth of the establishment. The Catholicos acted no part in it, but to go to the altar to receive the blessing, and to kiss the gospel. A rich cross of jewels, however, upon one of its covers, actually received the salutation; and thus, in this ceremony, as it has done in most of the observances of the church, it robbed the Word of God of its honours. The same device is generally observable in the copies of the gospel that are used in other churches. We now stood near enough to the officiating bishop to observe also another curious



device. The missal from which he read the prayers, was placed a little on one side, and directly before him upon the altar, was a small richly ornamented picture of the virgin, with the infant Jesus in her arms, so that all his prayers were said as if addressed to that.

I have neglected to mention, that we presented our letter to the general, prince Bebutoff, on Saturday, and were received by him with marked civility. We expected that the circumstance would somewhat improve the vartabéds' treatment of us; but were still a little surprised, on coming from the church to-day, to be invited by the master of ceremonies into the apartments of the Catholicos, as we understood, to have an interview with him. The object, however, was different. On a broad pavement in his garden, by the side of a salient fountain, was a long line of tables, loaded with a cold collation of meats, pastries, and confectionaries. One was placed at the head for the Catholicos, but he was absent. By the rest stood a crowd of vartabéds and numerous guests; and in the garden around, was paraded a line of peasants, armed with muskets. As we entered, a vartabéd, seizing us by the arm, led us to the table next that of the Catholicos, where stood the general and his lady. They welcomed us politely, and informed us that this was the *sacrifice* of the Catholicos, who was himself too feeble to be present.

A long prayer was now read by a vartabéd, and concluded by a toast, which was drunk with brandy, and accompanied by a salute from the guns of the peasants. Hardly considering ourselves forbidden, by apostolic authority, to partake, though the general had intimated that it was offered in sacrifice; we seriously set about eating of the good things before us, asking no questions. But as the prince and ourselves were settling the etiquette of priority in inserting the knife and fork, a vartabéd invited us, for better fare, to retire with himself and his companions; and, on looking about, we found that every morsel had mysteriously disappeared from the other tables. Following the crowd, we entered a long and gloomy arched hall, the grand refectory of the monks. Two stone tables extended its whole length, at which we seated ourselves, in company with more than thirty in the garb of vartabéds, and perhaps double the number of lay guests. But not a morsel of food, nor a dish, was upon them; and as each of our neighbours unrolled from his handkerchief his gleanings of the cold collation, we began to



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fear, lest, not having made such provision ourselves, we should fare but badly.

Plain but substantial dishes of meat and pilávs, followed by a variety of confectionaries, were soon served up, to the abundant satisfaction of our hunger; and a vartabéd, continually passing to and fro between the tables, with a jar of wine, occasioned a flow of mirth from some of our fellow-guests, which proved that the kindred appetite had no reason to complain. The dessert was addressed solely to another sense, usually not so exclusively provided for upon similar occasions. It was a single apple, which each smelled of, and then passed to his neighbour. The mind was also fed during the repast, by a long story about Echmiádzin, read by a monk from a sort of orchestra above us. A still longer oration followed, pronounced from a manuscript by the vartabéd at the head of the table, and containing, we imagined from its length, and the names that occurred, a relation of events in general, from Adam to Prince Bebutoff. A toast, followed by the blessing, finished the ceremonies. The peasants who filled the court without, accompanied the toast with a straggling salute of musketry; and a band of strolling musicians added their discordant notes to complete the deafening confusion.—Such was the Sabbath we spent at Echmiádzin, the residence of the head of the Armenian church, and esteemed the most holy spot in the country! and such the profanation of that sacred day, not committed by uncontrollable contemners of religious order, but directed as an appendage to a religious ceremony, by the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries of the nation! We had already observed in the morning, that five or six of the shops in the bazár of the convent, were open for the sale of goods.

The term *Catholicos* occurs early in ecclesiastical history, as the title of an office in the church, and was originally a mere Greek adjective, connected with the word *episcopos*, to designate a bishop who presided over a *whole* region. For, while the *patriarchs* of Alexandria and Antioch, and the *primates* of Ephesus, Heraclea, and Cesarea, presided over the five dioceses of Egypt, the East, Asia, Thrace, and Pontus, into which the eastern Roman empire was divided by Constantine the Great, we find likewise *Catholicoses* at the head of different sections of the church without the limits of the empire. The metropolitan of Persia, and the archbishop of Seleucia, first bore the title, acknowledging still their dependance



upon the see of Antioch. And in imitation of them, probably, the head of the Armenian and Georgian churches afterward assumed it.\* Armenian tradition pretends that St. Gregory, in a personal visit to Silvester, bishop of Rome, was consecrated by him Catholicos, with the express privilege that his successors might be consecrated by their own bishops†; though it concedes that that ceremony was, until A.D. 366, actually performed by the primates of Cesarea, of whose diocese Armenia was still an appendage. Then, Nerses the Great was declared by the king, nobles, and bishops, sovereign Catholicos of the nation, and his successors have never since been dependant upon any foreign dignitary for their consecration or their power.‡ For that blundering inversion of the relative rank of ecclesiastical titles, which has created patriarchs inferior to a Catholicos, who was himself once dependant upon only a primate, the church is indebted to moslem ignorance or heedlessness.

No laws of election, or of succession to the office, for a long time existed; and acknowledged merit, or successful intrigue, influencing the rulers, nobles, or clergy (as each or all wished, or were able to interfere), to an informal expression of public approbation, seems alone to have determined the choice. To its validity, also, the approbation of the foreign sovereign to whom the nation happened at the time to be subject, was necessary from the beginning; and in return for this approbation, an annual tribute was, as early as A.D. 1058, demanded by the Greek emperor.§ But, on the occasion of the secession of the bishop of Aghtamár, it was determined in a formal council, that thenceforward the unanimous consent of the four great sees of Puchni, Haghpad, Tuteós Arakeál, and Datev, should be necessary to the election of a Catholicos||; and we were informed on the spot, that the same sees are still represented in an assembly of twelve bishops, by whom the choice is now made, the remaining eight being members of the convent. The necessity, however, of the approbation of a foreign sovereign, which intrigue and money could at any time obtain, or cause to be withheld, has often made the law a dead letter, and thrown the decision into the hands of one aspiring individual, or of a few

\* Assemani Bibliotheca Orientalis, tom. 4, p. 615.

† Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 15. ‡ Ibid. p. 3, c. 18. § Ibid. p. 5, c. 15.

|| Chamcheán, p. 6, c. 4.—Puchni is still a considerable convent a few hours from Erivan, on the direct road to Tiflis by the Red Bridge. (See Chardin, vol. 1, p. 159; and Tournefort, vol. 2, p. 330.) The others have been already mentioned.



quarrelsome monks. In fact, after the revival of the modern kingdom of Persia, under the Sofies, Echmiádzin became as complete a prey to ambitious dissensions and barefaced bribery as did the patriarchate of Constantinople under the Osmanlies; several pretended to the office of Catholicos at the same time, and the convent was loaded with immense debts.

The present Catholicos, Ephraim, wisely sought security from these evils before accepting the office. The sum of about 400*l.* sterling, was stipulated as the unalterable amount of the annual tribute to the Shah; and, being bishop of a Russian diocese at the time of his election, he naturally sought the protection of the emperor. It was readily granted by Alexander in a personal audience, and the new Catholicos entered upon his functions, decorated with the insignia of grand cross of the order of St. Catharine, and clothed in embroidered pontifical robes, the fruits of imperial munificence.\* The protection thus formally promised, was, in an hour of need, not refused. Finding himself exposed to lawless depredations during the war between Turkey and Persia, in 1822, he succeeded in escaping into the Russian territories, where he was honourably received, and resided, principally in the convent of Haghpad, until the late peace with Persia placed Echmiádzin permanently under the Russian government. He was consecrated in 1810, and is now eighty-one years old, and nearly deaf and blind. Mr. Zaremba, in his late visit, had two gratifying interviews with him, and found him thankful for what the missionaries had done for his nation, and grieved even to tears that he had not now such bishops as formerly for his coadjutors. He has, in fact, always been reputed for mildness and tolerance, which increased our regret at being denied the opportunity of a personal interview. His infirmities were aggravated, by the fatigues of the festival, into a distressing illness, and obliged him at last to decline receiving us. He did it with an expression of regret, at being under the necessity of treating thus the first Americans who had ever visited his convent.

But while I am able to speak thus in favour of the Catholicos as an individual, I must warn you that the administration of his see partakes very little of his character. So long ago as when Martyn was here, it appears that Nerses had contrived, in the name of a synod which he had formed three years before, to get the management of it so completely into his hands, as to reduce the personal

\* Avdall's translation of Chamchean, vol. 2, p. 519.



influence of the Catholicos to a cypher. Upon his banishment, the synod effectively assumed the rights with which he had nominally invested it, and has since been the only seat of power in the convent. It consists regularly of twelve members, though when we were there, its number were reduced by vacancies to ten, seven of whom were bishops, and three vartabéds. The present character of its measures you will have learned from the recent events at Shoosha.

The peculiar duties of the Catholicos, which also indicate the extent of his power, and the chief sources of his income, are, *to ordain bishops*, and *to consecrate the meirón*. Whoever wishes for episcopal ordination, in any part of the nation, except within the narrow limits of the dioceses of Sis and Aghtamár, seeks it at Echmiádzin. The ceremony is performed by the Catholicos, aided by six bishops. And as it is not required that every candidate have a diocese in view, but merely present a certificate from his convent that it has need of his services as a bishop, the number of applicants is sufficient to stock almost every convent with idle bishops, and to bring considerable revenue into the treasury of Echmiádzin. For the gift that is communicated by the laying on of hands is not gratuitous. In the absence of sufficient data for an average of the price of ordination, I can only give the following items. One bishop is credibly reported to have given 200 ducats (about 450 dollars), besides another hundred (about 225 dollars), at the same time, for a mass for the soul of his deceased predecessor. Another bishop declared to us that in his own case he gave nothing for ordination. But on his arrival at the convent he made to the Catholicos a large present of cloth, cutlery, and whatever else of choice value the place from which he came afforded, together with a sum of money, called "kissing the hands." He then solicited the favour of distributing something among the bishops and vartabéds of the convent, and the Catholicos, saying "you need not give yourself the trouble," appointed a bishop to direct him how much to give to each. Thus three or four thousand piastres were expended. For the mass, on the day of his ordination, he gave also three or four hundred, and a dinner for all the monks, which followed, cost nearly a thousand more. Being from Jerusalem, he probably paid less than usual.

The *meirón* is the holy oil which is used at confirmation, ordination, and various other ceremonies, and is one of the principal



superstitions of the Armenians. Its sanctity is commonly believed to be miraculously attested by its being made to boil by the mere ceremony of consecration. The boiling of the meirón, indeed, is to Echmiádzin what the light from the holy sepulchre is to Jerusalem, though less superstition is required to believe the former than the latter; for, without attributing any very wonderful properties to the bit of the true cross, or to St. Gregory's hand, which are used upon the occasion, the oil may be made, by the many other ingredients which are put into it at its consecration, to exhibit all the phenomena of boiling, while, although the light at the sepulchre may originate without fire, from phosphorus or the rays of the sun, to separate from it the property of burning, can only be done by a superstitious imagination. Not only is the value of the meirón enhanced by many incredible stories of its miraculous properties and effects, but it is made by the laws of the church absolutely necessary to several ordinances, especially to that of confirmation, and, being a complete monopoly, it becomes not an unprofitable speculation. It is carried through the nation by a *novirág*, or nuncio, who is a vartabéd or bishop appointed to collect contributions for the convent. Such agents are sent very frequently wherever the Armenians are scattered to urge the claims of Echmiádzin upon the purses of all the spiritual children of St. Gregory, and they are peculiarly successful when they carry in their pocket a bottle of meirón; for the sacred gift is often carefully withheld until the people have produced what the agent is pleased to consider their quota of the contribution.

In the vicinity of Echmiádzin there seems to be little less than a formal sale of it. The vartabéd who visited Shoosha while we were there, not only acted as wekeel of the Catholicos, for the suppression of heresy, but was clothed with the more profitable office of *novirág*, for the collection of contributions and the distribution of the meirón. Delegates of the different villages visited him, and while the contribution was fixed at so much per head, the conditions of their receiving the meirón were settled in a manner not unlike a formal bargain in trade. If the few data that came to our knowledge afford a correct general average, the province of Kara-bagh contributed upon that occasion to the treasury of Echmiádzin not far from ten thousand dollars. St. James's at Jerusalem is the only other Armenian convent which custom allows to employ *novirágs* to increase its funds. One of them was



in this vicinity at the time of our journey; and although his convent does not manufacture meirón, he was not without an expedient for enforcing its claims. He argued, in his preaching, it was said, that all departed spirits have to take Jerusalem in their way to heaven, and that none are allowed by St. James to pass, except such as have contributed to his convent! In reaping the harvest for his employers, the novirág of either convent always gleans copiously for himself. For not only is he entitled to the profits of every mass he says, and to some other special contributions, but no vouchers being required to the accounts he renders at the termination of his mission, the widest door is opened for embezzlement. And it is a well known fact at Jerusalem that almost every novirág returns rich.

Among the other sources of the Catholicos's income, pilgrimages and the glebes of the convent may be mentioned. Every pilgrim is expected to pay, according to his ability, for the privilege of visiting the shrine of the holy illuminator. The domains of Echniádzin formerly embraced twenty-three villages, if we may believe the secretary of the Catholicos, who affirmed that its claims to that number were attested by written documents from the Shah. He said, however, that it had *presented* to the emperor all of them but three. Among the three retained is the large village of Vagharshabád. The convent receives the capitation tax of a ducat and twenty per cent. of the produce.—You need not be reminded that the Catholicos receives all this income, as head of the convent, and that, of course, all the expenses of that extensive establishment must be drawn from it. The sum to be thus deducted, considering the number and character of its inmates, cannot be small. When we were there, the convent contained fourteen bishops, forty-five or fifty vartabéds, and seven or eight deacons.

The patriarchal power of the Catholicos, in the appointment of bishops to their dioceses, and the direct control of their duties as diocesans, has never, so far as we are informed, extended over the Armenians in Turkey since the establishment of the patriarchate of Constantinople. Still, wherever the Armenians venerate him as the spiritual head of their church, are governed by bishops of his ordination, depend upon him for their meirón, and send to him their contributions at the call of his novirágs, his influence cannot be small. These relations the whole nation, with the exception of the small dioceses of Aghtamár and Sis, formerly sustained to him.



But since he has become a subject of Russia the Turkish-Armenians have felt themselves forced by the Sultán's jealousy of Russian espionage and influence, to renounce them. The patriarch of Constantinople informed us, in May of 1830, that for about two years they had ceased to have any communication with him, and even to mention his name in the mass. "Not," said he, "that we have really deserted our Catholicos; we are still attached to him, and this is only a temporary measure which circumstances have forced upon us." Others affirmed that the Turks had been given to understand that the Catholicos of Sis was now the head of the Armenian church in Turkey. You will wish, after learning the character of the present administration of Echmiádzin, that this disconnection were something more than a temporary pretence. It would certainly leave the Armenians of Turkey more open to the operations of missionaries. Even let its influence in that empire return to its former state, however, and it will hardly be sufficient to throw insurmountable obstacles in the way of missions.

The power which the Catholicos is to enjoy in Russia has hardly yet been defined. We were assured that the plan of an ecclesiastical establishment for the Armenians had been presented to the emperor and approved by him; but it was not yet promulgated, and we did not learn its provisions. At present, bishops are appointed to dioceses in the Russian territories by the synod of Echmiádzin in connection with the civil power. The synod sends the names of two or three candidates to the emperor, and he selects one for the office. The following are the diocesans now subject to Russia, according to a statement given us by the secretary of the Catholicos, and agreeing with information from another intelligent gentleman, viz. the bishops of Bessarabia, Astrakhán, Tiflís, Akhaltsikhe, Eriván, Datev, Kántसार, Shámakhy, Sheky (subject to the bishop of Tiflís), and Tateós Arakeál, now at Nakhcheván. On the side of Persia, the secretary said there was a bishop at Tebriz, a second at Isfahán, and a third in Hindostán, with Bagdád and Bussorah under him. He added also a written list of twenty-three diocesans in Turkey; but owing, perhaps, to the constantly varying number and limits of the dioceses in that empire, we did not find it correct, and I shall not enumerate them. Indeed he warned us that the list for the Russian branch of the church was true only for the present moment, as an order had just come down from the



emperor for an entirely new arrangement. In connection with our conversation upon the dioceses of his church, the secretary asked for our estimate of the number of his nation, and we mentioned about 2,000,000. He assented that such is the number usually written, but declared it to be his own opinion that 10,000,000 would be nearer the truth; for, it being understood by all that money was to be paid when bishops made their visits, great numbers concealed themselves, and thus failed of being recorded!

Monday morning found us still in the same state of non-intercourse with the members of the convent. We had had a visit from no one, the Catholicos had not sent for us, and every effort, but one, on our part to procure an interview with individuals, or to see the curiosities of the convent, had failed. We now determined to make one trial, and if unsuccessful, to depart. A request was accordingly sent to Hosep vartabéd, the librarian whom we met with the bishop on Saturday, to shew us the library. In reply, he invited us to call on him. We were conducted to the room which the general, who had left the evening before, had occupied, and found the vartabéd Hovhannes Sooreneán, the secretary of the Catholicos, for whom we had brought a letter from the bishop of Aderbaiján, and Lucas vartabéd, who had formerly been in Smyrna, together with one or two others, all evidently among the most active and intelligent members of the convent. Tea was served up, as a formal act of civility, in imitation of Russian customs in these provinces; but our reception was marked with much suspicion, and evidently intended to be very cold. The conversation was commenced by Hovhannes's inquiring the object for which we were travelling. We replied that it was to obtain information respecting Armenia and its inhabitants, especially the religious condition of the latter. He at first intimated, that for this a personal visit to the country could hardly be necessary, as it had often been described by travellers: but when we reminded him, that they had directed their investigations so exclusively to other objects of inquiry, as to leave us until now without a satisfactory account of the morals and religion of the Armenians; he admitted, that even in the antiquities of the country, they had made many mistakes, and declared that he was himself publishing a book at Tiflis, to throw light upon the antiquities of Haghpad, which might correct the errors of one traveller whom he named. He then intimated, that in order to avoid similar errors, we ought to direct



our inquiries to intelligent natives of the country; and thus gave us an opportunity to declare, that for that very object we had come to Echmiádzin.

Having obtained from us a declaration of the belief of our denomination, that Christ is God and man; he affirmed that the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ, are the two essential articles of Christian faith. The declaration accorded with a similar expression from the bishop of Datev, and reminds me to say, that the idea of *faith* commonly entertained by the Armenians, is a mere belief in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the name of whom they cross themselves; or, at most, an assent to the creeds which are repeated daily in their churches. Of justifying faith they have no knowledge; and when it is announced to them, they look upon it as almost as strange a doctrine, as did the philosophers of Athens upon those which Paul preached upon Mars-hill. We admitted that the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ, are essential points; but added that there was another, which we held to be not less important—the death of Christ for the sins of the world, that men through him might be saved. He barely assented that the Armenians believe that too, and passed to another inquiry, which evidently stood more prominent in his mind, and occupied the next place to the two articles he had already mentioned. It related to the perpetual virginity of Mary. We replied, that we all believe her to have been a virgin till her conception of Christ, because the Bible expressly affirms it; but of her state afterward, as we have no ecclesiastical canons on the subject, some may incline one way and some another, according as they understand the Scriptures. He declared the belief of his church to be, that she was a virgin both before and after the birth of our Saviour, and that she is the mother of God, but not born without original sin. Still his church would not pronounce those not to be Christians who believe differently.

The two things necessary for salvation, he said, were baptism and the communion. He afterward explained, that their doctors distinguish three kinds of baptism, either of which is effectual; one, the actual application of water in the name of the Trinity; another, the wish of a moslem or heathen for baptism at the hour of death; and a third, the desire of a person who is under a master that will not allow him to receive the ordinance. The same distinction he also admitted in regard to the viaticum, or communion



at death; it was necessary, but when it could not be had, the wish for it was equivalent. We replied, that in John iii. 5, not only being born of water, or baptism, but also being born of the Spirit, or internal regeneration, is declared to be necessary to admission into heaven; one of which we believe to be an external sign of the other, and not productive of it, nor necessarily accompanied by it; and then inquired if his church holds baptism to be regeneration, or acknowledges the necessity likewise of a change of heart. He confessed, in answer, that it knows of no other change than external baptism. I must add, from other authority, that, not only are the Armenians now entirely ignorant of that great change of moral character, regeneration, but they seem not to know of any special operations of the Spirit of God upon the heart, almost the only peculiar influences commonly ascribed to him, being those by which miracles are wrought. In fact, in their practical ideas of the economy of salvation, the third person of the Trinity seems hardly to have a place.—Questions respecting election and the kindred doctrines, which divide Calvinists and Arminians among us, have never been agitated in the Armenian church, nor do any opinions exist respecting them. Possibly something may have crept into its very oldest writers, from St. Augustin and others; but almost, if not quite, all its theological works are entirely scholastic, and probably the Armenian language does not contain a clear exhibition of the doctrines of grace out of the Bible.

According to the rules of the Armenian church, I believe baptism consists in plunging the whole body in water three times, as the sacred formula is repeated; but the present mode of administering it in Armenia, we were assured by more than one intelligent ecclesiastic, is by pouring upon the head of the child, sitting in the font, a handful of water in the name of the Father, another in the name of the Son, and a third in the name of the Holy Ghost, and then plunging the whole body three times, to signify that Christ was in the grave three days. That entire immersion, and the triple repetition, are not considered essential, however, is proved by the fact, that the baptism of even heretical sects, who only sprinkle once, is considered valid, and persons thus baptized are not required, as among the Greeks, to submit to the ordinance again, on entering the Armenian church. We once inquired of a bishop, what is the effect of baptism, and were answered, with the greatest astonishment at our ignorance, that it takes away original sin.



The doctrine, however, that all who die unbaptized, are thrust immediately down to hell for Adam's sin, though firmly held by the Armenians, has not led them, as it has the papists, to allow, in urgent cases, of lay baptism. The ordinance can be performed by those only who have been admitted to priest's orders. Generally it is done, in imitation of the Jewish law of circumcision, on the eighth day, though dangerous illness sometimes hastens it, and when no priest is at hand it is postponed.

The Armenian church holds to the usual number of *seven sacraments*. Baptism, the communion, marriage, ordination, and penance have already been remarked upon, in this and preceding letters. The remaining two, *confirmation* and *extreme unction*, also came up in the course of our conversation with the vartabéds. The former is always performed at the same time as baptism; and consists in anointing, with due ceremony, the forehead, and the organs of the five senses, viz. the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and hands and feet, with the holy oil. In fact, the sacredness of that material so eclipses every other ceremony of the occasion, that, not only has *meirón* come to be the common name for confirmation, but in the estimation of the vulgar, at least, it is considered as acting a more efficacious part than even the water of baptism, in making the child an heir of heaven. It is always conferred by the parish priest who administers the baptism, and not, as in the English and Romish churches, by a bishop.—Extreme unction seems not to be universally practised by the Armenians. One bishop assured us that it is now entirely disused, and a gentleman of information told us, that he had searched for it in vain in the formularies of the church. Still, the vartabéds this morning, in agreement with some others of whom we inquired, contended that it is regularly administered *at baptism!* The reason assigned for so early an application of the last preparation for death, was, that the Armenians, being a scattered and oppressed people, liable often to die where a priest cannot be had, it is thought best to secure to every one at the commencement of life, what is so absolutely essential to the future happiness of the soul. Probably it is united in the ritual with confirmation, especially as both consist in anointing with *meirón*. Or rather, I suppose the Armenian church really has not this sacrament, and has only taken some part of the ceremony of confirmation, and called it extreme unction, in accommodation to papal ideas. It is never administered at the hour of



death. You will now perceive, that, as the communion also is always given at baptism, four sacraments are then crowded at once upon an infant generally only eight days old, viz. baptism, confirmation, extreme unction, and communion !

The vartabéd Lucas, who from the beginning had shewn much less candour than Hovhannes, and had particularly objected to his liberal concession of the Christian name to such as deny the perpetual virginity of Mary, at length seemed determined upon dispute, and threw out, as a bone of contention, an accusation against us of inconsistency, in admitting the crucifixion of Christ, and still not honouring the cross. We replied, that the death of Christ as an atonement for sin, is indeed the foundation and substance of all our preaching ; but we consider that if it be believed with the heart, the external sign is a matter of perfect indifference. At this he only grew warmer, and began to assign reasons for its absolute necessity. Determined not to be drawn into a heated argument, we reminded him that we were not now disputing whether we or they are right, but only conversing for mutual information ; and then, briefly explaining how the doctrine, that what Scripture enjoins must be done, and what it does not enjoin is unessential, lies the foundation of all our theological views, we told him that we do not deem this ceremony necessary, because it is not ordered in the Word of God. A word or two among themselves led them to conclude, that, as the Bible does indeed say nothing of the sign of the cross, we were beyond the reach of argument respecting it ; and immediately the conversation assumed a more friendly turn.

We were happy to have an opportunity, in answer to several questions, to describe to them the simplicity of our own religious rites.—Lucas inquired if we say mass every Sabbath, or once a month, or only once a year. To meet the idea prevalent among them, that the performance of mass is the chief duty of a priest, we replied, that our clergy *preach* regularly once or twice every Sabbath ; but that the elements of the eucharist are never consecrated, except when all who are qualified are expected to commune. Then the form described in the Gospel is used : the minister first prays, breaks the bread, and distributes it ; then he prays again, and distributes the wine ; and a hymn, sung by all, closes the ceremony. This occurs in some places, we informed them, every month, in others once in two months, and in others still, once in three months. He approved.—Hovhannes inquired if we have



the sacrament of confession. In order to shew them, that though we are destitute of this, we have another effectual means of preventing unqualified persons from approaching the table of the Lord, we replied, that before admission for the first time to the communion, every candidate is examined as to his faith and practice by certain officers of the church, of whom the pastor is generally one. If they approve, he is proposed to the body of communicants; and, after sufficient time has elapsed for them to form an opinion of his character, he is admitted by vote, and ever afterward has a right to commune, without any subsequent examination. At the time of his admission, however, besides a public profession of his faith, he enters into a solemn covenant with the other communicants, and they also with him, in which is included an obligation to exercise a Christian watchfulness over the conduct of each other. So that each is watching over the other, and the pastor over all, and if any one be overtaken in a fault, and private admonitions fail to reclaim him, he is brought before the church, reproved, suspended from communion, or excommunicated, as they shall determine by vote. We have more than once found an account of the organization of our churches, though a thing never dreamed of before, make a very favourable impression upon Armenians to whom we have given it, and such seemed to be its effect upon the vartabéds. They only inquired, as we had said that none are ever admitted to the communion till they arrive at years of discretion, if baptism is postponed in the same way; and seemed satisfied at our reply, that it is generally administered the first time the mother is able to attend church, and sometimes earlier, if the child is in danger of dying.—They also inquired which way we direct our devotions. We replied, that, believing God to be present every where, as much in the west as in the east, we never think of the points of the compass when we are about to pray. The Armenians, however, they assured us, are always careful to face the east at the time of prayer; a thing which we often observed, especially in the position of their churches. Indeed, so well is that understood to be the point toward which they always pray, that we have more than once known our moslem muleteers, when at a loss for the direction of Mecca, inquire of the Armenians for their *kiblah*, and turning at right angles, begin their devotions.

Having been already informed, that the Armenians generally



labour neither on Saturday nor on Sabbath evening, we inquired when, according to their church, the Sabbath commences. Their reply was, that, though the true day begins and ends at midnight, their canons forbid labour after sunset on Saturday evening, and after the same hour on Sunday evening, leave every one to his own inclinations. The same rule applies to the great festivals, but the fasts are kept from midnight to midnight. They argued the correctness of their church, from the expression, "the evening and the morning," in the first chapter of Genesis; and from the declaration that Christ lay in the grave three days. For the Armenians, and, I believe, the Greeks also, never doubt that our Saviour arose precisely at midnight, and of course the first day of the week cannot be included among the three that he was in the grave, unless it begins before that hour. Labour is now usually suspended on Saturday, from the termination of evening prayers, which is generally a little before sunset.

They assured us, in answer to our inquiries, that a time is believed by them to be coming, when the whole world will embrace Christianity; and as a proof that it is at hand, they declared that the Persians, as a body, are now prepared for such a step, were they not afraid of their government. We suggested, that the labours of Martyn had contributed to persuade some of that nation of the truth of Christianity, and reminded them of his visit to their convent. They barely said that they recollected his name, and went on to affirm, that the moslems are much more ready to unite with the Armenians, who are their neighbours, and well known, than with any foreign missionaries. The German missionaries had been preaching, they said, so many years, and still had made no converts, while they had baptized, since the war, forty or fifty, who had come of their own accord to the convent, and solicited the rite. They acknowledged, however, that not very strict qualifications were demanded, as, instead of a belief or even knowledge of all the dogmas of their church, only an acknowledgment of the Trinity, and of the divinity of Christ, was required of the candidates; the latter of which points they explained, when questioned by us, if a belief in the atoning sacrifice of Christ was not deemed necessary, as embracing the whole character of the Saviour.

The morning passed away in friendly conversation, during which many apologies were made, that no more attention had been paid us on our arrival, and an invitation was given us to dine with them



to-day. We accordingly sat down about twelve o'clock to a plentiful repast. Trout had formed a part of almost every meal we had eaten in the convent; and observing it also upon the table now, we inquired from whence they were obtained. They replied, that they were from the lake of Seván; and affirmed that that lake contains twelve kinds of fish, which succeed each other in regular rotation, month by month: this was the month for trout!—The visit to the library, our request for which in the morning had procured us this interview, was not forgotten, and after dinner, we were conducted to it by Hovhannes. The books were crowded together without much order, and though numerous, they doubtless fall far short of his estimate, which was 16,000 volumes. Among them were many manuscripts; some bearing marks of considerable antiquity, and others yielding to none that I have ever seen, in any language, in beauty. He declared that the convent has now no school, and that its press is no longer in operation.

From the library Hovhannes invited us to his own apartments, and in the course of a long conversation, communicated a variety of information, which I have given elsewhere. We became much interested in him. He was educated by the Catholicos, has been with him ever since his appointment to his present office, and is now his secretary. No other of the monks knows Russian, nor, I believe, any foreign language. He, doubtless, according to the fashion of the country, expressed more friendship than he felt, but many circumstances convinced us, that he really possessed more candour and sense than is usually found under the cowl of a monk. He visited us in the evening, to request that we would ask him then for any additional information we might desire, as he should be engaged in the synod to-morrow. When speaking of missions in the morning, he had lamented that divisions had hitherto weakened the church, and prevented the conversion of the world; and now he voluntarily expressed great pleasure, that the different sects are becoming more friendly to each other, and that the religious wars which disgrace the history of former ages, are heard of no more, and would, in fact, in the present state of the world, be impossible. "It is time," said he, "that those who agree in the doctrines of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and the atonement (we feared the latter was suggested only by our repeated mention of it in the morning), should no longer be divided by such minor points as fasting and the like."—A tray of beautiful apples, pears,



grapes, and melons, from Hosep vartabéd, in the evening, gave additional evidence of a desire to make up for the coldness of our first reception.

After a cup of tea with the vartabédés, we left Echmiádzin on the morning of the 23d of November. Before reaching Eriván, I had another attack of the ague and fever, which was repeated for two or three days succeeding. But with no other remedy than riding, it passed away, and we reached Nakhcheván again on the 29th of the same month.

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## LETTER XVII.

### FROM NAKHCHEVAN TO TEBRIZ.

Leave Nakhcheván—Cross the Aras—Benighted in the open air—Perykend—Khoj—Delayed by sickness—Conveyed in a takhtirewán to Tebriz—Kindness of English friends—Description of Tebriz—Its trade—The prince royal, Abbas Mirza—His government.

DEAR SIR,

WE left Nakhcheván for Tebriz, in Persia, on the 3rd of December. The shortest and most usual route is by Esgy Joolfah, on the Aras, and Merénd, an ancient Armenian city, now the capital of a district of the province of Aderbajján. But hearing that the plague existed at Merénd, we avoided that route, and took the road to Khoj. The general, Prince Bebutoff, had politely ordered the police at Nakhcheván, by letter, to furnish us with a guide, and we were detained until 10 A.M. before he was ready. Starting at that hour, we descended immediately into the alluvial, which lies between the town and the river. It was little cultivated, and the villages upon it were few. After a ride of two fúrsakhs, we reached the Aras at half-past 12 o'clock, near Abbas-abád, a fortress named after its founder, the present prince royal of Persia. Its mud walls and deep fosse, constructed upon the modern principles of fortification, would give it an appearance of strength, had it a more favourable location than the mere level plain. We were not allowed to enter it, and passed on to the ferry at the quarantine ground,



perhaps half a mile below. Here was no lazaretto, and only two or three rooms under ground, and a miserable tent or two, accommodated a company of half-starved travellers, who were doomed to a quarantine of ten or fourteen days. *Karmir-vank* (the red convent), a monastery of some distinction in the ancient canton of Koghten\*, appeared not far below. It was now the residence of the bishop of Aderbaiján, whom we had met at Nakhcheván on our first visit.

Our passports had to be examined by the commandant of the fortress, before we could cross the river, and were accordingly sent by the hands of a soldier. He returned with the report, that a general being there, the commandant was too much occupied to attend to them. Thus, though there was but just time to reach the nearest village on the opposite side before dark, we were detained three or four hours. We had laid in, too, but a small stock of provisions in bread and cheese, and the poor people here being unable to spare us a morsel, we had the prospect of a hungry as well as a houseless night. At length the general was seen approaching. It was General R. whose kindness in previous embarrassments we have already had occasion more than once to acknowledge. He expressed much surprise at finding us so often detained, and instantly despatched one of his suite to see that we had our passports immediately. They soon came, but the ferry was so extremely awkward, that before all our company and baggage reached the Persian bank of the Aras, and were ready to proceed, the sun was near setting. Where we landed, about a thousand bushels of barley in bags, were lying unguarded upon the ground. It belonged to the prince, Abbas Mirza, who had sent it hither to be passed over the river for a market. The Russian authorities ordered it to undergo a long quarantine before being admitted, and directed him to send men to take care of it. Provoked by such a regulation, he caused it to be thrown upon the ground, and there it had lain for three months when we passed, entirely exposed to the weather, and to the depredations of birds, beasts, and men. Our muleteers failed not to allow their horses to take their share. We pushed on with the hope of finding some village before many hours; but just as the last ray of twilight left the horizon, we lost the path, and were consequently obliged to spread our carpets in the open air for the night. The dry gravelly lands which occupy the space between the Aras

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 134.



and the mountains on this side, afford no wood for a fire, nor would our muleteers, indeed, allow one to be built even of weeds, for fear of attracting robbers; a caution which shewed us that we had now left the safety produced by Russian police. We had left its embarrassments and hindrances, too; for the Persian territory opens its arms to every traveller, neither asking him whence he comes, nor whither he goes.

*Dec. 4.* The night proved calm and mild for December, in the latitude of  $39^{\circ}$ . We were up at 2, and started at half-past 3 A.M. Our Persian muleteers had begun, almost from the moment of crossing the Aras, to spit, and throw their curses at the country upon the other side; and now, just before sunrise, they stopped the whole party to say their prayers, apparently as an expression of their satisfaction at finding themselves once more out of the polluted territories of the hated Russians. We had, before that hour, left the valley of the Aras. Beyond, our path led, with little perceptible ascent or descent, through defiles between naked hills, exhibiting hardly a sign of cultivation. High mountains around were covered with snow, the weather became raw and windy, and we had no food the whole day to brace us against the cold, and give us strength to ride, but the remnants of our bread and cheese, which we had taken yesterday morning from Nakhcheván for a lunch. Thus we rode twelve hours continuously.

About 11 A.M. we crossed a fine stream of water, flowing to the left toward the Aras, from a plain on the right, which seemed extremely fertile, and contained a number of villages. A draught from the river was the only refreshment we found here. A ridge of white and gray marble succeeded, and we entered another much larger plain, and so marshy that it was now partly covered with water. Here we reached a moslem village, called Pery-kend, at half-past 3 P.M. and sought for lodgings. It was filled with Kürds, whom the snow had driven from the neighbouring mountains, to seek here for winter quarters; and for that reason, its inhabitants pretended no good accommodations could be furnished us. We had not yet learned how to manage the inhospitality which the Persians have been taught, by their government and their religion, to practise toward foreigners, nor indeed were we acquainted with its nature; and, being too fatigued to proceed farther, we accepted a dark corner in a stable filled with horses, cows, and asses, and almost suffocating us by its stench. I was myself, in fact, reduced



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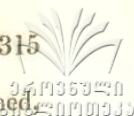
to such weakness by sleeping out in the night, by the chilliness of the weather, and so long a ride upon an empty stomach, in addition to my previously enfeebled health, that even a resting place among the cattle was acceptable.

*Dec. 5.* We spent a miserable Sabbath at Pery-kend. A cold rain storm, and my diseased health, confined me to our stable.

*Dec. 6.* Our morning's ride to Khoy was three fursakhs. When next able to take notes, I could recollect very few circumstances respecting it; and, in fact, a thick mist enveloping every object, limited very much the observations of us both. Almost the whole distance was a plain, and at one place a copious spring of warm salt water boiled up in a small pond by the side of the path. As we approached the city, the fertility of the soil increased, cultivation became general, and villages were frequent. We viewed the plain of Khoy under more advantageous circumstances, on our return from Tebriz. The whole basin, inclosed by the surrounding mountains, is of great extent. Much of it is broken up by hills of a dry soil, and not remarkable for fertility; though they, as well as the mountains, are destitute of the sun-burnt and arid aspect of the scenery of Tebriz, and of the valley of the Aras, and afford, upon their sloping sides and swelling summits, verdant pastures for flocks and herds. In the vicinity of the city, the plain is extremely level, and watered almost to excess; and its fame for fertility has not exceeded the reality. Besides numerous gardens which beautify it, grain and cotton are extensively cultivated.

We had hardly dismounted at Khoy, before it was told us that an English lady had just arrived from Tebriz, and taken lodgings in the same caravanserai! Wishing to know if the plague was still at that city, as reported, we informed her by a messenger, who we were, and proposed to call. She replied, that her accommodations were too miserable to allow her to receive a visit without embarrassment, and that she preferred calling on us. We had neither chair nor stool, nor any thing to sit upon, but our carpets spread upon the floor. We bethought ourselves of the frame of our tandoor, and covering it with a cloak, offered her a seat upon that. She proved to be French, instead of English, and was the person whom other travellers have mentioned as engaged in instructing the daughters of the prince. She has been in the country many years, sometimes travelling in the dress of a man, which doubtless well became her.





*Dec. 7.* We spent the day at Khoy, and were almost confined, by the cold and dampness of the weather, and my feeble health, to the caravanserai. In our subsequent visit we had a better opportunity to see the city. In former times, it belonged to the Armenian province of Vasbooragán; now it is one of the cities of Aderbaiján. Though its walls, as well as its houses, are of mud or unburnt bricks, broad and regular streets, intersected by canals with shade trees upon their banks, gave it an airiness and regularity unknown in almost every other oriental city I have seen. It has a lofty and well built bazár, too, that would hardly disgrace Constantinople. The extreme moisture of the plain, upon the level surface of which it is situated, combined with the warmth of the atmosphere in the summer months, must subject its inhabitants to frequent fevers. A son of the prince royal, named Jihangir Mirza, now resides here, and governs for his father the district of which it is the capital. Its moslem population we heard estimated at from 4000 to 7000 families. A distinct suburb contains about 100 families of Armenians, who have two churches and two priests. In the villages around are a few more, but nearly all have emigrated north of the Aras.

*Dec. 8.* A tolerably well made and perfectly straight road conducted us from Khoy, for about two miles in the direction of Tebriz, to the principal river that waters the plain. A double ditch of running water lines each side, and waters rows of the *sinjid*, or silver-leaved willow, which form an avenue the whole distance. The *sinjid* is a common tree in all the plains of Aderbaiján which we visited, and being invariably planted along the margin of canals, never failed to remind us forcibly of the imagery of the first Psalm. It produces an insipid fruit, resembling the date in form, which abounds in every bazár. About half way from the city to the river, a side avenue conducts from the road to the country seat of a khan, in an extensive and luxuriant garden of fruit trees upon the side of a hill, which carried our minds away to other countries, where protecting governments allow private wealth thus publicly to exhibit itself more frequently than in Persia. The river is crossed by an arched bridge of stone.

Of these ornaments to the suburbs of Khoy, however, I noticed nothing this morning, for fog, and rain, and the suffering of disease prevented all observation. A return of fever at Khoy had increased my debility, and now my strength soon failed. Pain in



my back made the motion of my horse intolerable, and I dismounted to walk. Thus I could proceed but a few rods, and that only by the aid of my companion's arm, before weakness forced me to my horse again. By alternately riding and walking, however, I succeeded, with the greatest difficulty, in reaching Haji Seid, 3 fursakhs from Khoy. It was a moslem village, at the entrance of a pass in the mountains which conducts to the lake of Oormiah. A corner of a miserable stable was the first lodging-place that offered, and the best that the villagers could be persuaded to give us. Dirty as it was, I was never so glad to reach the best American inn, nor did ever a fire seem more cheerful than the burning cow-dung which was blazing here when we entered. I remember no more, for a stupor, which had been gradually increasing during the morning's ride, now completely overcame me. I sunk upon the ground, and remained unconscious of what passed for two days. My companion could not obtain from me an answer to the simplest questions, nor had I the strength to turn in bed, if that name may be given to what was under me. It was a cloak and a carpet laid upon the ground, and made, at length, somewhat softer by the addition of some coarse weeds procured with difficulty from our moslem host. The stench of the cattle, which filled our stable at night, polluted the air, and the lowing of calves disturbed us. No motives my companion could use were sufficient to procure another room, or even to cause the cattle to be removed from this. And such was the dread of ceremonial pollution from Christian contact, that the slightest conveniences and attentions were denied us, or given with the greatest reluctance. Our food even had to be cooked in our own dishes by our own servant.

On awaking from stupor, I could neither walk nor stand alone, but was free from fever, and my first thought was to inquire how we should escape from such a miserable spot. Mr. Dwight had anticipated me, and already sent a messenger to the English gentlemen at Tebriz for whom we had letters, to inform them of our condition, and request the aid of a takhtirewán to convey me to town. I hope never to forget the kindness of Dr. Mc Neill, the physician and first assistant of the embassy, upon that occasion. In a very short time after intelligence of my illness reached him he entered our stable, though the distance was at least seventy or eighty miles. The takhtirewán also soon arrived, as near as the mountainous



road would allow it, and on the 15th, seven days after we reached the village, he made arrangements to remove me. The mountains which separate the plain of Khoy from the lake of Oormiah are at this point about two fursakhs broad, and composed chiefly of naked sandstone rocks, giving place now and then to small fields of grain. Our progress over them was slow and somewhat difficult, owing to the peculiar construction of my carriage. A *takhtirewân* resembles a sedan chair, except that it is carried by two mules or horses, instead of men, requires a person to assume a lying instead of a sitting posture, and is completely closed from the external air. It is the only native carriage known to the Persians. Had a projecting rock or a stumble of a horse disturbed its balance, I must have been overturned, and perhaps precipitated to a great distance. A kind Providence preserved me from all accidents. As we descended the farther side, the windows were opened a moment to afford me a view of the lake of Oormiah: I had no other prospect of the country during the remainder of our ride to Tebriz. I might give you in this connection the observations of Mr. Dwight, but I prefer to postpone them till another occasion, when we both inspected the same ground again. Especially as this, being the point where we passed beyond the boundaries of ancient Armenia, is a convenient spot for breaking the narrative. Dr. McNeill passed on before, leaving orders with the heads of the different villages to accommodate us comfortably; and we reached Tebriz in safety on the 18th of December.

The English embassy to the court of Persia, in order to be near the prince royal, into whose hands the Shah has resigned the management of his foreign relations, has its seat at Tebriz. Mr. Cartwright, the English consul-general at Constantinople, had kindly recommended us by letter to Col. Mc Donald, the late ambassador, well known as a traveller under the name of Kinneir, and to Maj. Willock, former commander of the English forces in Persia. The latter being in the country during the winter, hospitably opened his house in town for our residence. To find, after lodging so long in filthy stables, and being reduced to the extremity of weakness by disease, comfortable and well-furnished apartments, ready for our reception the moment we arrived, was more grateful than can be conceived, and doubtless contributed much to the restoration of my health. For many other attentions, Maj. Willock, and his brother, Sir H. Willock, former chargé d'affaires,



deserve our sincerest acknowledgments. Col. Mc Donald had been taken from the world before we arrived; but Capt. Campbell, then acting envoy, treated us with a hospitality that could hardly have been exceeded had we been his own brothers. He also readily facilitated our proceedings in every thing that depended upon his official capacity; and, what we esteemed not the least of his attentions, he opened his house for religious services on the Sabbath, and took pains to procure a full attendance. Our meetings usually consisted of nearly twenty who spoke our language, and are among our most satisfactory recollections of our visit to Persia. While Dr. Mc Neill remained at Tebriz, he not only contributed to the restoration of my health by his medical advice, but by his superior intelligence added much to our information of the country. Diplomatic business at length called him to Teherán, and he was subsequently appointed resident at Bushire, one of the highest offices in the gift of the Presidency of Bombay. After his departure, Dr. Cormick kindly took charge of my health. He is the same physician who healed Martyn of a similar disease when he was at this city, and he seemed to have retained the highest opinion of him as a Christian, a companion, and a scholar. His long experience in the diseases of the climate was of great utility to me. Among the gentlemen whose civilities we experienced at Tebriz was Mr. Nisbet, an officer in the commissariat department, who, together with his wife, entered into our feelings as missionaries, and sympathized with us in our views of the spiritual wants of the natives of the country. In a word, though I have invariably received the readiest aid and attention from English gentlemen whom I have met in travelling, none have equalled our friends at Tebriz in hospitality and kindness.

Tebriz is the capital of Aderbaján (called also the Azerbaijan), the ancient Media Atopatene, and now one of the most populous and productive of all the provinces of Persia. It stands at the head of a plain which extends about thirty miles eastward from the lake of Oormiah. Arid mountains, without a tree or a particle of vegetation of any kind, and composed of ledges of rocks or gravelly earth, surround it on the east, and extend off on either side of the plain toward the west. Though externally the very picture of barrenness, they are said to be rich in mineral substances, and green, bright red, and various other unusual shades, intermingled with brown, their prevailing colour, convince even the distant observer



of the presence of some unusual ingredients. In iron, copper, and salt they are known to abound. A mine of the latter is wrought not far from the city, and the river which descends from the mountains on the east and flows through the whole length of the plain is strongly impregnated with it. Armenian history pretends that Tebriz, which it usually calls the royal *Kantság*, was founded in A.D. 246 by Khósrov First, and named *Ta-vrej*, "this revenge," in memory of the vengeance he took upon Ardasheer the first Sasanian, in driving him from Persia.\* The Persian geographers assert that it was built by a wife or a general of Haroon el Rasheed, and named *Tebriz*, "the fever scattered," from its salubrity†; while Strabo contradicts both, by mentioning in his day *Gaza* (evidently the same as the *Gazakon* of the Byzantines and the *Kantság* of the Armenians) as the royal city of Atropatia. In successive ages it has occasionally fallen for a time into the hands of the kings of Armenia, the emperors of Constantinople, and the Osmanly Sultáns, but generally it has belonged to the rulers of Persia. Though repeatedly overturned by earthquakes, and destroyed by wars, it has often resumed a rank of the first importance. In the time of the Moghúl Hoolakoo, Marágha indeed eclipsed it, but generally it has been the capital of the surrounding region.

It contains at present, according to the estimate of the English residents, about 60,000 inhabitants. Extensive and populous suburbs around seem almost to form a part of it, as they probably in fact once did. Among them are many and luxuriant gardens of fruit trees, in which the apple, peach, pear, quince, apricot, almond, and grape abound, and contribute to the abundance and variety of its first bazárs. Numerous canals run in every direction to irrigate them, and pass the roads by descending in tunnels, so as to leave the level unbroken by the unevenness of bridges. The city itself is surrounded by a wall of brick and a fosse, which present some appearance of strength. Its houses are a mockery of every idea of oriental magnificence. In the style, to which we have found no exceptions since entering the valley of the Aras, they are of mud; built either by throwing a handful of that material, in a damp state, irregularly upon another, or by first drying it in the form of bricks, and then arranging it in regular layers. The streets, except where the English have made a few side-walks, as causeys through the

\* Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 12.

† Chardin, vol. 2, p. 333.



mud to each other's houses, are unpaved. Not a window opens toward them, nor is hardly a house to be seen. As you pass along, nothing appears but naked mud walls, broken now and then by an irregular opening with a clumsy door. In some cases a doorway of burnt bricks indicates some attempt at display; while frequently in the gardens of the suburbs, security is more especially consulted by making the door of one entire stone. Enter, and you find an open yard, used either for a garden, or a barn-yard, according to the taste of the owner. The house is almost invariably of one story, in order that no one, either from his window or his terrace, may pry into the secrets of his neighbour's harem; and generally presents a model of the most perfect irregularity. Room is added to room successively, as an increase of wives, of children, of servants, or of horses, makes it necessary to build greater, and all are scattered separately in different corners of the yard, or thrown carelessly together so as to inclose court with court, according as convenience or chance may direct.

Aside from the *Ark*, an enormous ruined tower or castle within the citadel, and the splendid and even magnificent remains of an old mosque just without the Teherán gate, the city contains no public buildings, ancient or modern, that can compensate at all for the meanness of its private dwelling houses. Many of its mosques cover a sufficient extent of ground, but they exhibit to the spectator without, hardly a single feature of beauty. Even the minaret, that abundant and sometimes beautiful ornament of a Turkish city, is wanting. We saw but one in Tebriz, and that was broken; in the towns of the sheeies generally, minarets are extremely rare. The caravanserais are numerous and large, and the bazárs extensive; but there is nothing in the architecture of any to attract attention, except that the new bazár is spacious, and covered with lofty domes and arches. The inhabitants of Tebriz, indeed, exhibit peculiar skill in the construction of the dome and arch. No frames to support, or forms to shape them, are used. The architect, guided merely by the eye, and sticking the bricks upon each other as fast as they can be handled, with nothing to uphold them but a cement which assumes almost immediately the consistency of stone, gives them a turn of perfect regularity. Whatever may once have been the reputation of Tebriz for scattering fevers, it has it no longer. Its winters are not very unlike those of our middle States, and frosts and snows are frequent; but its



summers are said to be extremely sultry, and it has been observed that most English residents have at first to undergo the seasoning of an intermittent. The earthquakes which have repeatedly overturned it, are still so frequent, that some of the best houses have apartments built entirely of wood, for a refuge from their convulsions. One occurred while we were there, which prostrated a wall of some length.

The causes that have ranked Tebriz among the places which have been proved by a succession of ages to be convenient, under almost every combination of circumstances, for the location of important cities, are numerous. Among them, doubtless, is the fact, that it is in the heart of a large and fruitful region. But the principal is, that in it naturally centres an extensive trade. Its bazárs are very extensive, and constantly so thronged, that one can with difficulty work his way through them. Yet with the exception of a few silk goods wrought from materials raised in Mazanderán, it is the seat of no important manufacture; and even they are all the work of domestic looms. Nor do its shops generally exhibit any thing but the productions of common mechanics, and merchandize of inferior value. Enter the magazines of its caravanserais, however, and you will find them stored with the riches of India, and the skill of Europe. It is as a thoroughfare of commerce that Tebriz is distinguished. At nearly equal distances from the Indus, the Persian Gulf, Constantinople, and the marts of Russia, it has commercial relations with all. Merchandize to the amount of 600,000 tománs (about 1,800,000 dollars) passes from it annually over the Caspian Sea to Astrakhán. The costly goods of Kashmeer and the East, are brought by its merchants from the region of the Indus, and exchanged in the bazárs of Constantinople for the manufactures of Europe. While some of the productions sent to India by the British East India Company, for the Persian market, find their way hither from the ports of the Persian Gulf; and the productions of Arabia are brought from Bagdád.

The whole of this trade is in the hands of natives. Not a European mercantile house exists at Tebriz, nor has England, after all her splendid embassies, to this moment any commercial treaty with Persia. The nearest attempt at direct commerce with the country, which she has recently made, is the appointment of a consul at Trebizond, with liberty to trade. He has already an agent at Erzroom, and contemplates the establishment of a branch at

Tebriz. Should it prove an advantageous channel for introducing English manufactures, probably they will pursue it in preference to the circuitous one now taken. Distance is in favour of it, for the Tebriz market at least; for, while from Bushire there is a land carriage of 1200 miles, at an expense of from ten to thirteen tománs the load; Trebizond is only about half as far, and the carriage from thence but half as dear.

The unsettled nature of the Persian government, however, threatens still, as it has done for ages, to deter foreign merchants from risking large depôts of merchandize in the country; and the disposition, now so strongly manifested by the native traders, to import their own goods from extensive foreign markets, affording the chance of an advantageous selection from large assortments, will render the success of any foreign establishment, which may attempt to bring merchandize to them, at least doubtful. At any rate, a mercantile firm that shall extend its branches no farther east than Trebizond or Erzroom, can expect to do nothing in the Persian trade. For the merchants of that country will never stop at a small magazine in either of those places, so long as a little more time, which they know not how to value, and the distance of a few hundred miles, which it costs them almost nothing to travel, will bring them to the extensive depôts of Constantinople, which have so long furnished them with goods to the amount of many hundred thousand tománs annually.

The principal circumstance that has attracted the attention of Europeans toward Tebriz, is its having been for many years the residence of Abbas Mirza, the prince royal of Persia. Such flattering accounts were given by travellers of his talents and liberality, when he first entered upon the duties of public life, that the world expected from him important reforms to improve the political, if not the religious condition of his countrymen. He was marching with his army to a distant part of the empire, during our visit, and we had no opportunity to see him. The accounts we heard of him, however, disappointed us much. In regard to many European innovations, indeed, he excels his countrymen in that freedom from prejudice, by which many of them are distinguished from the Turks. His religious views, too, are liberal, and his practice tolerant. But with his liberality he is also immoral, indulging in drinking, and other species of dissipation. So long as he had an able prime minister, his defects as a ruler were less apparent. But now, not



only does he shew himself possessed of the most perfect duplicity, but of a weakness which places him under the control of an unprincipled man, who has only to intoxicate him, to carry the most unwelcome point.

With the characteristic avarice of his family, he makes the heaviest exactions from his province that can be borne, and adopts arbitrary and objectionable modes of collecting them. We met at Tebriz Jaafer Kooly khan, a chief of the powerful tribe of Afshárs, and one of the first of the Persian nobility, who had been deposed from the office of governor of Marágha, which he had long held, merely because another had offered a larger tribute than he was paying or would pay. In other instances also has he virtually sold similar stations to the highest bidder. The officers under him are not restrained from flagrant abuses. It was reported, at the time of our visit, that the governor of Tebriz had leagued with the principal thieves in town, for a share of their booty. Justice is known to be perfectly venial. A gentleman informed us, that he once, for an experiment, brought a cause before the chief judge. For his gratification, or to pay him for his trouble, in compliance with the customs of the country, a small present was given; but the opposite party offered higher, and the gentleman's claims were negatived. In a word, moral principle, political uprightness, and the rights of the subject, are subjected to the dictates of sensuality, ambition, and avarice. And none, permit me to add, but those whom scepticism leads to forget the benefits that Christianity confers upon man, ought ever to have expected any other result, under the influence of the false and corrupt religion of Mecca.

The prince has indeed long succeeded in preserving the public peace in his province. Open robbery, with occasional exceptions, on the borders of the Kürdish mountains, is unknown; and the persons and property of foreigners are perfectly safe. But it is an interesting question, whether the death of the Shah may not, any day, break up all the foundations of public order and security. The order of succession has hitherto been so perfectly unsettled in Persia, that at the death of a Shah, whoever is strong enough, hesitates not to aspire to the throne; and upon such occasions, rival parties have often imbrued their hands in each other's blood, and brought upon the nation all the evils of complete anarchy. In the present instance, the size of the royal family makes the number of candidates unusually large. Abbas has the advantage of all the



others, in having been nominated to the succession by his father, secured in it, as is understood, by a treaty with Russia, and entrusted for a long time with the organization of the whole regular army of the realm. But an army is of little use, when want of punctuality in payment estranges its affections from its leader, as is said to be the case with his. The Russians would perhaps not hinder an insurrection that might give them occasion to interfere, and pick some of the richest jewels from the crown they disposed of. And as to the father's wishes, few of his sons, probably, will regard them after death shall have stripped him of his power.

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## LETTER XVIII.

### TEBRIZ.

Number and political condition of the Armenians of Tebriz—Their moral character—Their education—Festival of the Purification—Bishop Israel—His preaching—Conversation with him—Armenian way of salvation—Moslems of Aderbaiján not of the Persian race—Persian civility and falsehood—Slight prejudices against European customs, with high ideas of ceremonial purity—Fondness for religious discussion, with bigotry or scepticism.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE already informed you, upon the authority of the ex-bishop of Aderbaiján, that, at the close of the late war, 9000 Armenian families emigrated from this province to the Russian territories. He also assured us, that there remained behind 2500 families, and that 50 or 60 families of the emigrants had returned; and I am inclined to credit him, rather than the present bishop at Tebriz, who declared that there are now not a thousand Armenian families in the province. The number of families of that nation in the city itself, is not greater than 60 or 70. They have a church, which is served by four priests.

The political condition of the Armenians of Tebriz is peculiar. When the prince found so many of their nation inclined, at the close of the war, to avail themselves of the protection of Russian laws by emigration, he promised all who would remain, the privi-



lege of an English governor. Major Hart, who then commanded the English forces here, was consequently appointed to that office; and was clothed, for their government and protection, with very extensive powers, which the prince has always held inviolable. Upon the decease of that gentleman, in 1830, Dr. Cormick was prevailed upon, by the solicitations of the people, I believe, as well as by the request of the prince, to accept the appointment. He held it while we were there, and however much he was troubled by the bad conduct of the Armenians, he never complained of want of countenance from the prince, in protecting them from moslem oppression and abuse. His authority did not extend beyond the city. So well convinced, indeed, is the prince, of the value of his Armenian subjects, that, besides this important privilege, he also takes pains to keep their priests in his interest. That he gives them a regular salary, we were assured is not true; but they occasionally receive from him suits of clothing, and other valuable presents.

Of the moral character of the Armenians of Tebriz, we received the worst impression. Their priests are unprincipled hirelings, and besides other irregularities are given to much wine. The people are accused of the basest ingratitude. The English, out of regard to their professing the same religion, have always done much to protect them, but have received no thanks. Particularly did they, when the Russians were marching upon Tebriz, take many into their families as servants, merely to defend their lives from the rage of the moslems, who suspected them of acting as spies. Letters from these same persons were afterward intercepted, declaring to the Russians that they would have helped them to enter the city much sooner, had not the English prevented their giving the proper information. One day, we were informed, the *kaim-makám* (lieutenant of the prince) warned the ambassador to caution the English to keep all their servants within doors, as every other Armenian was to be slain that night. Not only was the caution given, but English serjeants were stationed as sentinels at all the avenues to the Armenian quarter, to prevent the massacre, and the next day a promise was obtained from the *kaim-makám*, that they should not be touched. And yet they conducted themselves, after the entrance of the Russians, in such a manner, that, to avoid their insolence, was one reason why the English left the city. Without having a doubt that the Armenians are capable of all the ingratitude implied in this statement, it is a question



whether the fact, that the English could not but be regarded as aiming expressly to uphold the power of their oppressors, which the Russians were endeavouring to humble, might not naturally make them its victims. In dishonesty they are even below the moslems. For want of a better Armenian servant, we were forced to engage one who was known to have stolen his master's carpets when the Russians entered Tebriz, and who, according to his own confession, had regularly overcharged his market bills to the amount of four or five tománs (about 12 or 15 dollars) a month. His former employer assured us, that he could give no better character to five or six other Armenians who had served him; and the oldest English resident in the place thought, that, considering the habits of his countrymen, we ought not for such conduct to reject him.

Faithfulness to the charge imposed upon me, demands a word upon another point of moral character, which I would willingly leave concealed in the dark parts of the earth, where it is so grossly developed. Concubinage may be practised in other countries, by such as are cast out of the pale of all decent society, without implicating the moral healthiness of public sentiment. But here it exists under circumstances which plainly shew the mass of the Armenian community to be infected with its corrupting influence. Public opinion does not frown upon it. Parents even sell their daughters, into concubinage; and not only, we were assured, are these victims of lust admitted to the communion, and the other privileges of the church, as good Christians, but their priests have been found to share in the gain. This sad state of morals does not exist among the Armenians of Tebriz alone. In Erzroom, Eriván, and Nakhcheván, Armenian parents have been known to sell their daughters for the same criminal purpose, for a limited time. The opinion was expressed to us by a Christian observer, that polygamy even, though not common, exists among the Armenians. He believed, though he knew of no instance, that priests might be induced, by money, to marry a man a second time, knowing that he had already one wife; and that the connivance of the bishops might be secured by the same means.

We had been informed at Nakhcheván, by the former bishop, that the Armenians, before their emigration, had nothing in the whole province of Aderbajján deserving the name of school; only a few children being here and there taught to read. The same statement was confirmed at Tebriz, in reference to their present



condition; with the additional fact, that not only are the common people extremely ignorant, but many even of their leaders have not the knowledge of letters. In Tebriz, Mr. Nisbet had recently made a benevolent effort to procure the establishment of a school. Promises were obtained of a house for the teacher, and school of thirty or forty scholars, at from half a tomán to two tománs per annum, and occasional presents of grain and the like. Fifty or sixty tománs, nearly enough for the teacher's salary, were thus pledged, and Mr. Nisbet engaged to aid in supplying the deficiency. He applied to the missionaries at Shoosha for a teacher, and no prejudices were manifested against receiving one from that quarter. There seemed to be even a willingness to concede, that the Scriptures alone should be made the standard of the religious instructions to be given. But just as the necessary documents were about to be signed, the cholera broke out, and diminished and scattered the inhabitants, and the project had not been resumed. We applied to their present English governor, to know how he would regard a missionary school for the Armenians, and were gratified to receive a full expression, not only of his own opinion of its desirableness and prospect of utility, but also of his decided belief, that no prejudices against it would be felt by either laity or clergy.

On the 25th of February (13th of February, old style), being informed that an important ceremony was to be performed in the church, we attended at the hour of evening prayer. In the yard before the main door, a concourse of people stood around a quadrangular space, in the centre of which was a pile of dry brushwood. A priest read service upon the door-step, while a man by his side enforced silence upon a parcel of boys, by an occasional box on the ear. Opposite these officiators sat a bishop in state, with a vartabéd or two by his side. A plate for contributions, filled with wax tapers, was circulated among the crowd, and each one as he put in his money, took out a taper, which was soon lighted. The bishop, supported by two vartabédés and a number of priests, repeated a prayer on the four sides of the brushwood; then, after a word of exhortation, the by-standers, especially the boys, pitching over each other, plunged their tapers into it, and it was soon in a blaze. While prayers were still chanted over it, some relighted their tapers at the risk of being scorched; others scattered about the burning brands; one leaped through the blaze; and all seemed in the highest glee. It was the eve of the Purification of the Virgin;



and with such profane mockeries do the Armenians generally introduce that festival. In some places the fire is built within the church.

You will perceive that as the virgin, according to the laws of Moses, must have presented herself for purification forty days after the birth of her son, the Armenians do not agree with either the Latins or Greeks, in the time of celebrating the nativity of our Saviour. They have, in fact, retained the custom, which anciently prevailed extensively in the east, of observing Christmas on the 6th of January.\* The baptism of Christ is also celebrated on the same day, and in token of it, a cross, to which they conceive the Saviour to be inseparably united, by its consecration, is plunged in water previously blessed, with much pomp and ceremony. In regard to most of the great festivals, not connected with Christmas, the Armenian calendar agrees with the Greek.

The bishop who officiated on this occasion, we met several times during our delay at Tebriz. His name was Israel. He was formerly bishop of Albagh, a small district in the Kùrdish mountains between Salmás and Joolamérk, which, under the name of Aghpag, was formerly a canton in the Armenian province of Gorjaik. The convent which he occupied, bears the name of the apostle Bartholomew, who, if we may believe Armenian tradition, was martyred on the spot where it stands.† He was offended at the efforts of the Russians to induce the Armenians to emigrate, and seems to have obtained the deserted bishopric of Aderbaiján as his reward; for he assured us that he was now sole bishop of the whole province. Though his manners partook of Kùrdish roughness, we were glad to learn that he maintains a good private character, and is not opposed to the improvement of his people. Vivian's Three Dialogues, lately printed at Moscow for the German missionaries, was circulated among his flock while we were here, with his approbation; and his treatment of us was always friendly, and destitute of any sign of jealousy. We found few ecclesiastics better acquainted with the doctrines and ceremonies of the church, and his readiness to communicate, furnished us with considerable accurate information.

\* A Syrian writer, quoted by Asseman, says, that in the eastern and northern provinces, the nativity of Christ, as well as his baptism and the Epiphany, was celebrated on the 6th of January until the time of Arcadius. And another says that the former festival was transferred to the 25th of December, in accommodation to a heathen festival which was celebrated on that day, and which many of the Christians were invited and inclined to attend. Bib. Orient. vol. 2, p. 164.

† St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 177.



There was a tinge of Romanism about it, however, which made us suspect that he had sat at the feet of some papal emissary. Though exact in his knowledge of canonical doctrines and ceremonies, his ignorance of every evangelical idea seemed complete; and he exhibited, with unusual candour, that pharisaical state of mind, which the religion of the oriental and papal churches tends so strongly to create.

He had, at a previous interview, invited us to attend mass at his church, and we accordingly went the next morning after the ceremony just described. Observing us soon after we entered, he invited us to a position next himself, by the platform in front of the altar, designed for the officiators at morning and evening prayers. He is distinguished among his brethren for preaching, and, either in compliance with his own disposition, or to gratify us, who had had one or two conversations with him on this important duty of the clergy, he gave us a sermon this morning between prayers and the mass. In the absence of a pulpit, a chair was placed for him in front of the altar, and a rich carpet spread before it. Chairs were also offered to us, but we declined them, and took our seat among the audience on the floor. His subject was the proper observance of the fasts; and his thoughts were probably unpremeditated, and of little value. But his manner was striking. He commenced sitting, and that seemed the posture which he chose to maintain, but the animation of delivery frequently called him upon his feet, and urged him forward to the edge of his carpet, with a fine effect. No tone marred his enunciation, nor any stiffness his gestures. It was nature that spoke and acted; and nature indeed in too undisguised a form, except for these regions. Violent actions; varied, often high-keyed and passionate tones; and significant contortions of the countenance, expressed his sentiments more clearly than the words he uttered, and would have astounded a more polite audience, as the ravings of madness. But here, where every man is accustomed from infancy to be kicked and flogged into his duty, all was in place, and was needed. He took occasion in his remarks, to reprove the boys who had sported with the bonfire yesterday, by accusing them of bringing upon their church the ridicule of the foreigners who were present; and, as if unable otherwise to express his feelings, he actually spat at them in contempt. All his violence of action, however, failed of fixing the attention of his audience. The women were repeatedly engaged in



loud talk ; once, conversation seemed to be general throughout the house ; and the boys, stationed near the altar for the purpose of aiding in the performance of prayers, manifested such a constant disposition to play, that he was once constrained to order them, in a rage, to be silenced by flogging. This was the only Armenian sermon we had an opportunity to attend, and, in fact, the only one we heard of, except at Shoosha, during our whole journey.

The bishop invited us, during prayers, to take a cup of tea with him ; and after sermon, which was rather long, we followed him to his rooms. In passing out of the door, he stopped a moment to say a prayer over two corpses, that were laid there in preparation for burial. The ceremony was ended by placing an unconsecrated wafer upon the head of each. The information elicited by our conversation this morning, and by several others which we had with the bishop, is given in different connections elsewhere, and need not be repeated. At our first interview, however, some topics were discussed worthy of a distinct notice. We were introduced to him, by Mr. Nisbet, as priests from the New World ; and his curiosity immediately suggested many questions respecting our ecclesiastical polity and doctrines. We replied, that we belonged to the American church ; acknowledged no subjection to the pope ; and were under none of the churches of the Old World. He inquired whether we had bishops of our own ; and on learning that, though there are a few in the country, most of the people are not subject to them, he wondered where our priests could get ordination. We informed him that an assembly of priests performs the ceremony ; and met his astonishment at the irregularity of such a course, and his inquiry how priests can make priests, by asking, if bishops in his church can make a Catholicos who is greater than they, why cannot priests make a priest, who is their equal ? In this case only, during our journey, was such an objection made by an Armenian to our clerical orders, and our answer silenced, if it did not satisfy, the objector. In other cases surprise that we have only priests and deacons, was uniformly removed by a reference to the commonly acknowledged fact, that in the Armenian church all above deacons belong to the general order of priests. The idea of apostolical succession we never heard started, except as implied in the question of the bishop upon this occasion.

He seemed reluctant to believe that we were not papists, and assured some of the company, even after we had expressed in



strong language our abhorrence of the pope, that we were connected with the Romish church. While we were protesting against such a mis-apprehension of our sentiments, a visitor, who seemed better acquainted with western theology than his bishop, inquired whether we were Lutherans or Calvinists. We consented to bear the latter name; and still the bishop, unable to conceive that we should not belong to some sect within the range of his polemic theology, went on to ask if we were not followers of Arius or Nestorius. We reminded him, that after what we had said in a previous part of the conversation respecting the divinity of Christ, he might have omitted the name of Arius; and as to Nestorius, we had no connection with him, and no acquaintance with his sect. Not contented with our bare assertion, he plied us with questions about the virgin, and was at once convinced, by our lax notions respecting her perpetual virginity, that we had imbibed the heresy of Nestorius. We explained, that it was a point to which we attached no importance, and that, so far as we knew, it had never been agitated among us. "Why," said he, with great astonishment, "you are priests! what have you to preach about when points like this are deemed unimportant?" "The fundamental doctrine of the gospel," we replied, "the death of Christ for the sins of the world, and the way of salvation through him. Certainly that is of sufficient importance to be preached." We then proposed to him the direct question, "What must we do to be saved?" He answered, as if we had asked a very unnecessary question, "Why, we are saved already, and need only confess, do penance, and commune, and we shall go to heaven!"—His conversation assumed this argumentative character, only at our first interview; for at the next we directly declined all dispute, and he thus expressed his own abhorrence of it. "You see," said he, pointing to the coloured glass in the window of his apartment, "the rays of light, by passing through different panes, are cast in shades of red and green, and yellow, upon the floor, and yet they all come from the same sun, and are light still; so with the different sects, they all have one origin, and ought to feel that they are still Christian brethren."

The reply of the bishop to the momentous question, "What must we do to be saved?" was dictated by the doctrines of his church, and is, in substance, the same that is received by every one who goes to confess his sins in the ear of his priest. Let us examine



it in detail. The sins from which we need to be saved are considered to be of two general kinds, *original* and *actual*. Adam's fall brought all his posterity under the dominion of satan, to be led captive by him at his will. From this original sin, or in other words, this captivity to satan, the consequence of the first transgression, Christ died to deliver us. The medium appointed for the application of this salvation to individuals is baptism. All who are baptized, therefore, are saved from the satanic dominion brought upon them by the original sin of Adam, and left at liberty to work out their salvation by serving God, or to secure their destruction by serving satan, according to their own voluntary choice.

But if, after having thus received our share of the salvation of Christ, we choose again the service of satan by the commission of actual sin, what can we do to be saved? We are directed, not to the intercession of our "Advocate with the Father," nor to his blood, which "cleanseth us from all sin," but to the confessional of the priest, and to his absolution. Without confession, no forgiveness is to be expected; but with it, it is sure upon two conditions. Hearty *contrition* for having committed the sins confessed is one, and making *satisfaction* or amends for them is the other. The former, it is to be feared, is almost universally little insisted on by the priests, and neglected by the people. In prescribing the appropriate satisfaction for particular sins lies all the difficulty which the confessor experiences in the cure of souls. To aid him, sins are divided into mortal and venial. The former are embraced under seven general classes, viz. sins of pride, envy, anger, sloth, covetousness, gluttony, and lasciviousness, and are considered as deserving the eternal punishment of hell. The latter are not so exactly enumerated, and are deemed not fatal to the soul. The kinds of satisfaction, too, though many, are carefully arranged into three classes, viz. fasting, prayer, and charity.

In view of this code of crimes and punishments, which, in the books of the church, is subdivided and explained with all the minuteness of a civil statute-book, the priest sits in judgment upon the sins confessed, and condemns the penitent to whichever kind of satisfaction seems their most appropriate retribution and best antidote, and proportions the length of the fasts, the number of prayers, or the amount of charity, to their enormity. The effect of this satisfaction or penance is supposed, in theory, to be three-fold; to give evidence of sincere contrition for sin, to chasten and



correct the evil propensities from which sin originates, and to be accepted by God as a substitute for the retribution of eternal torment in hell. In practice, it degenerates into a set of mere external heartless observances. The priest, having thus sat in judgment upon the sins of his fellow, and sentenced him to a mock retribution, ends his impious assumption of the prerogatives of God, by pronouncing pardon and the absolution of all connection between the sinner and the guilt of his sins.\* This act of absolution declares the penitent to be again made capable of enjoying the benefit of his good works, and he starts afresh to merit heaven, by fasting, alms-giving, pilgrimages, masses, the communion, and other similar ceremonies.

Such is a brief but tolerably complete view of what the Armenians are told they must do to be saved. It is not a system of salvation by *grace* in Christ, for it looks not to him for pardon; nor of salvation by *good works*, for it depends not upon morality for acceptance with God, but of salvation by *ceremonies*, for it makes the observance of superstitious rites a set-off against a life of sin. It neglects equally the law and the gospel, and would send men to heaven without an atonement, and without morality. In one respect, however, the Armenian church is behind the papal in its attempts to work out a way to heaven of its own contriving. It has never devised any great reservoir of the superogatory merits of Christ and the saints, the key of which is lodged with an earthly vicegerent of heaven, empowered to dole them out at pleasure to whomsoever is so rich or so fortunate as to obtain his favour. In other words, it knows nothing of the whole system of *indulgences*.

It did not enter into our plan to make many inquiries respecting the Persians, nor do I deem it important to publish all that we actually learned respecting them. You may wonder, indeed, that I call the moslems of this province *Persians*, for, with the exception of the Kürds on the west and south, they are all of the *Turkish* race, and speak the Turkish tongue. A few at Türkman-chai, in the direction of Teherán, though they have now no connection with their brethren farther east, have retained the particular name of Türkman. The rest are of the same mixed descent, from all the Turkish tribes that have overrun this region since the days of Tóghrul, as those to whom your attention has been already

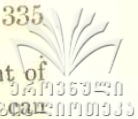
\* In this account of the Armenian way of salvation, I have closely followed the Armeno-Turkish Catechism, already repeatedly quoted. See p. 55, ss.



directed to the north of the Aras, and they speak the same dialect of Turkish. Persian is spoken by none, except as a foreign language.—But you must remember that Persia is inhabited by a “mingled people,” and the title of *Mulook-el-tuwajf*, or kings of the nations, once given by the Arabs to its Sassanian kings, would be perfectly appropriate to its present rulers. The fixed inhabitants of towns and villages in almost every part, except the provinces bordering upon Turkey and the Caspian, speak the Persian language; and among them, doubtless, are the remains of the ancient Persians, though they have also a large amount of Arabic and other blood. But the Persians have almost always been a subject race, and now the citizen and the peasant hold a less honourable rank than the nomad. Between seven and eight hundred thousand of the inhabitants of Persia still live in tents, and, while not one of them is of the Persian language, they furnish the flower of her army and the pride of her nobility. Turkish, Arabic, Kürdish, and Loorish are their native tongues. The Shah himself is of a Turkish nomadic tribe. If we could confine the name of Persian to those who are of the Persian language, therefore, we must deny even to the sovereign of the country his title of citizenship. The title of *Persian*, however, is one of which he is ignorant. The Persians do not acknowledge the name we give them and their country. *Fars*, or *Farsistán*, from which it is derived, is known to them only as the province of which Shiráz is the capital. *Irán* is now, and has been from the earliest ages, the indigenous name of the whole kingdom. Their neighbours, the Turks and Arabs, call it, with genuine Grecian arrogance, the land of *Ajem*, or barbarians. We have perpetuated the mistake of the ancient *Grecians*, and shall probably continue to regard it as needing correction less than many of the errors which “lying Greece” has told us in history. While we persevere, therefore, in extending the name of a province over the whole realm, I see no objection to applying it also to the whole nation, or at least to all who profess the national religion, so as to include the moslems of Aderbaiján.

Though Persian is not the native language of the moslems of Aderbaiján, however, it is spoken by many. It is the language of trade and of government, and is familiar to some even of the lower orders in towns. It shares with the Arabic the attention of all who enjoy the privilege of schools, and they are many in Persia. We were assured by an extensive and acute observer, that the





Persians set an example to even Christian nations in the extent of common education. He judged that two-thirds of the males can read. There are a few schools only for females; but in every village, except the smallest, there are at least two mollahs, one of whom acts as a teacher for boys. In some instances, gentlemen of wealth employ private instructors, and then the children of their servants and slaves, as well as their own, enjoy their instructions. Generally, schools are kept only in mosques, and those who teach them are always either really mollahs or are ranked with them, the profession of schoolmaster being regarded as a branch of the priesthood. The objects of education are religion and business. The first is provided for by learning to read the Korán and repeat a few prayers in Arabic. An understanding of the supposed revelation of the will of *God*, and of what is addressed to him in prayer, however, seems not to be regarded as necessary, and the Arabic branch is generally carried no farther than to a correct pronunciation of words. But the medium of intercourse with *man* must be understood, and the meaning, as well as the sound of Persian words, is taught at school. Still, I apprehend that only a small portion of the boys in this province study long enough to become proficient in the language.

The first trait in the character of a Persian that strikes a traveller coming from Turkey is his civility. The respect shewn by the lower orders to the higher, even of *their own countrymen*, is greater in Persia than in the neighbouring empire. Turks in office are treated with deference by their dependants; but no nobility, nor any hereditary distinction of rank being acknowledged, much of a feeling of republican equality and of individual independence is still discernible, and every Turk seems to regard every other somewhat in the light of a brother. Persia, on the contrary, is a land of high-toned aristocracy. Nobles, both hereditary and otherwise, are numerous. The title of *khan* distinguishes all, except those of the royal blood, who are known by that of *mirza* appended to their name. It is not confined to moslems; Armenians also are sometimes graced with it. The nobles and the rich aim at the greatest state in equipage and servants; in tenaciousness for points of etiquette they can hardly be exceeded; and display and splendour seem to be all that they admire. The lower orders take the attitude of extreme obsequiousness: no forms of homage savour too much of servitude for them to render; espe-



cially if they are dependants is their manner of service with a resemblance to worship, to which no parallel can be found perhaps nearer than India.

The manners of the Persians toward *foreigners* differ from those of the Turks even more than their form of intercourse with each other. The Turkish gentleman receives you sitting, coolly puts his hand upon his breast for a salutation, asks you to sit as if the invitation in any form was an act of condescension, and a few common-place questions, with long intervals of silence filled up by pipes and coffee, complete the ceremonies of your reception. The Persian not only honours you by rising, but, putting you at once into the position of his lord, and assuming the attitude of your slave, he forces you into his own seat, if it happen to be the most honourable. An active conversation, enlivened by inquisitive thought, and polished with a profusion of compliment succeeds, and you leave him with the feeling that he has improved upon the politeness of the politest nation of Europe. Even the moslem peasant of Turkey would fain treat you as his inferior, and disdains to act as your servant; but the Persian not only scruples not to fill the most menial station, but makes a more respectful and submissive domestic than I have found in any other nation.

Such civility highly prepossesses the *traveller*, at first, in favour of the society of the nation which exercises it, and makes the *missionary* hope that his instructions may be received with as much deference as his person. Experience soon convinces both, however, that if the Persian excels in politeness, he is forced to it as a mask to cover his deceitfulness. The commonest man is found almost as dexterous in plot and intrigue as if he were practised in managing the diplomacy of Europe; and allurements of the Persian's civility are soon eclipsed by painful experience of his unequalled duplicity. The traveller finds his hospitality converted into a money-making speculation. Not long since a khan, who had been educated in the Persian school, sought out an English traveller and his lady as they were passing through a neighbouring city in the Russian territories, and hospitably compelled them to accept of gratuitous accommodations in his house and at his table for a number of days. At their departure, he saved them the trouble of going to the police-office by procuring their passports himself, and brought with them a pretended charge from the inspector for about 50 or 60 dollars. The traveller, though aware



that not a cent is asked of foreigners for passports in Russia, was ashamed to doubt the word of one from whom he had experienced such attentions, and paid the amount, thus replacing in the purse of his host perhaps twice as much as his entertainment had cost. Not many years since, a missionary, as he was passing through a city in Persia had an audience of the prince royal, and obtained from him, as he supposed, most liberal offers of patronage and support for a missionary school. But when we were at Tebriz, the khan, who acted as interpreter, boasted of having most egregiously deceived both. During a long conversation, he so perverted the remarks of each, in converting them from one language to the other, as to make the missionary propose to the prince a school for teaching only the language and the learning of the English, and argue in its favour, when in fact his proposal and his arguments were all religious, and to make the prince, with no more than such a mere literary institution in mind, approve most fully an attempt to give Persian children a Christian education, and promise to send his own sons. The missionary and the prince separated equally gratified, the one at having secured such high patronage for his benevolent projects, and the other at the literary prospects opening to his children; and the khan now amuses his friends by the relation of his dexterous duplicity. So much are the Persians given to falsehood and deceit in their dealings with each other that mutual confidence is hardly known. In the mercantile profession good faith scarcely exists among the minor tradesmen, and is strictly observed only by those whose business is so extensive as to render credit absolutely necessary to success. In a word, so disgusted did we become with the smooth duplicity of Persia, that we were not displeased to return again to the blunt, I had almost said honest, incivility of Turkey.

The Persian, of Aderbaiján especially, differs also from the Turk in his readiness to admit European innovations. The sultán has recently, indeed, made havoc of all the prejudices of his countrymen; but the Turk had formerly not a strong prejudice only, but an absolute contempt for almost every fashion that came to him from the west. One would suppose that his religion was bound up in the folds of his turban, and that his honour would vanish with the loss of his shalwár, so obstinately was he attached to those articles of dress. In his whole routine of habits, too, he seemed to delight in the contrary of the practice of his European neighbours. The



moslem of this province of Persia manifests little dislike for what is European. Tread not upon his carpet with your shoes, nor touch his beard with your razor, and he will make few objections to your hat or pantaloons, and will imitate you in the furniture of his house and his table. The military tactics of Europe, with an imitation of its uniform, were introduced by Abbas Mirza long before even Mohammed Aly attempted them in Egypt. Chairs and tables are used in the houses of some of the rich at Tebriz; several beautiful porcelain tea sets, of the latest English fashion were eagerly bought up when we were there, and many shops in the bazar were stocked with a variety of European table furniture. In short, the rich Persian is fond of fashion, and that which comes the farthest is, in some cases at least, liked the best.

But you must not imagine, because Persians may be induced to adopt articles of a European's dress or furniture, that therefore they have no dislike to his religion or his person. According to the strictest of their tenets, the touch of a Christian, or of what a Christian has touched, is ceremonially impure, and unfits them for the performance of their devotions. A high sense of ceremonial purity is the distinctive trait of the sheey sect. In doctrine, more stress may be laid upon the exaltation of Aly, and the rejection of the first three kalifs, with the traditions compiled under their direction, but in practice this stands most prominent. One is inclined, indeed, to imagine it to be a plant of Hindoo rather than of sheey origin, and perhaps it is, but it seems now to be indigenous wherever that sect exists. I have known a *Metawaly* (the sheey of Syria) break a jar for its having been polluted by the mere touch of a Christian's lips for a draught of water. Such a dread of ceremonial impurity makes a nation exceedingly inhospitable. The rule, indeed, is not observed in all its strictness by the Persians. Some, especially in private, regard it not at all. In the Russian provinces it has less influence than in Aderbajjan, and here less than in other parts of Persia. Even in this province, however, the common people will often try many expedients to prevent one of another sect from entering their houses, and in many places would suffer a foreigner to sleep in the street rather than open their doors to him. To eat from the same dish with him is the extreme of pollution, and none but those whose liberality approaches to infidelity will do it. We have known our muleteers to search for a moslem village at some distance from the one where





we lodged with Christians, in order not to eat bread of Christian cooking: and always when we were going into a Christian region did they lay in a stock of provisions at the last moslem market. In order not to pollute the dishes of those who entertained us, we carried our own kitchen and table furniture; and more than once, I doubt not, we might have been denied a draught of cold water had we not carried our own drinking cup. Once we were amused to see an old Persian, to whom we had paid a small silver coin, go and wash it thoroughly in a tank of water before he put it in his purse. The whole sect says, by its conduct to every other, "Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou." Even the sunny moslems of Turkey are not exempted from the general charge of impurity.

The trait of a Persian's character which most gratifies the missionary is his readiness to discuss religious topics. The Turk meets with a haughty frown the most distant attempt to commend the religion of Christ, takes as an unpardonable insult the denial of the mission of Mohammed, and despises the Bible as too corrupt a copy of the Law and the Gospel to be worthy of his notice. The Persian receives the New Testament with reverence. The English residents at Tebriz unanimously testified that no objection is made, by either mollahs or people there, to its being circulated and read. We found a copy exposed for sale, by the side of the Korán and the Persian poets, in the shop of a moslem bookseller in the bazar of that city. It is in some degree sought after. Mr. Nisbet disposed, while we were there, of the last of his small stock, consisting, I believe, of twenty or thirty copies. The purchasers always professed to receive it as the word of God, declared that they were interested by the perusal of it, and in no case, with the exception of the set of passages which speak of the divine nature of Christ, did they object to any part of it as spurious. Three copies were taken by our second Ledyard, already alluded to, on leaving Tebriz for his second visit to the valley of the Indus, where he hoped to exchange them for some old Greek manuscripts, which he had seen there, and imagined to be relics of the Bactrian colonies. Another was purchased, to be taken to Mecca, by a pilgrim who left after our arrival. No Christian can fail to be gratified at seeing the word of God penetrate, even by single copies, into such a centre of superstition as Mecca, and such a region of robbery and ignorance as the upper Indus. What a happy exchange for the Afghán to receive the pearl of great price



while contributing to enrich the historical treasures of Europe. And how delighted would be the pilgrim to find Jesus Christ the chief corner stone, and be washed from his sins in his blood, so as no longer to trust in the stone of the Kaabah, or seek purification from the water of Zemzem!

The Persians are comparatively tolerant, also, of a discussion of the merits of Mohammedanism, and many will argue with all the technical coolness of a dialectician. Most of the higher class of the nobility, and the learned profession, indeed, pay little regard even to the external forms of religion, and are at heart infidels or sceptics. In fact, *Soofy* is known to be little better than another name for sceptic, and the number of that school in Persia is estimated by Sir John Malcolm at two or three hundred thousand. I do not adduce the free use of wine, which is said to be indulged in by many of the rich in secret, as an evidence of religious liberality, for it is both an unwelcome and a deceitful test. I am no more pleased with the liberality of the moslem than I am with that of the Christian wine-bibber, and often is indulgence in the cup united with unusual bigotry, as if to make up for the breach of one commandment by an over strict observance of the others. Shah Abbas the Second could lie drunk for days in succession, and yet fear pollution from the touch of a ring of Christian manufacture until it had been purified by water.\* As many of the nobility and the learned are assembled at Teherán and Shiráz, those places contain more religious liberality than others. Merchants are in Persia the most bigoted of the respectable classes, and they are numerous at Isfahán. Tebriz has seen much of foreigners, and therefore probably stands first in liberality toward European innovations.

You must not understand that all Persians are inclined to free-thinking. The mass of the people are not only very sincere in their faith, but have decidedly an appearance of greater strictness in the observance of their rites than even the Turks. I have already spoken of their prayers and of their regard for ceremonial purity. In their ablutions, too, they adhere nicely to the rigid prescriptions of the sheey sect. Often have we known our fatigued muleteers, on reaching a stream of water with parched tongues, use it for purposes of purification before quenching their thirst. Their observance of the Ramadán is exact to the letter of the law, and attended with an unusual appearance of religious feeling. Even

\* Chardin, vol. 6, p. 319.



our muleteers, when travelling on foot in that fast, at the rate sometimes of more than thirty miles a day, never ate a morsel, drank a drop, or smoked a pipe from early dawn till sunset. In the bazárs of Tebriz, during that period, a large part of the merchants were to be seen reading the Korán as they sat in their stalls; and more than once we found them too attentively engaged in it to wait upon us as customers. Even on common days most of them had their Koráns by their side; and many a time, as I looked upon them, did I ask myself, upon how many merchants' counters in our cities does the Bible appear! Frequently, in passing through the bazárs, we saw persons addressing a crowd assembled around them. They were dervishes preaching or telling tales to the people. Once in Khoy we found a venerable old man in the public square seated upon a horse and supported by a long spear, which he rested upon the ground, addressing most eloquently a listening multitude around him. He might have sat for the picture of the eloquent dervish, which Hareery has so finely drawn in his first *Makámeh*. Dervishes seemed to be more numerous here than in Turkey.

Even among the free-thinking part of the community, a nearer view will discover hardly an easier access for the truth. They are either wrapt in a bewildering labyrinth of philosophical speculations or are utterly regardless of all religion. Sometimes they will carelessly admit all your arguments, and at others reject them merely for the sake of disputing, depriving you equally, in both cases, of the hope of producing a conviction of the truth. To such a result there is still another obstacle. The opprobrium of apostasy from Mohammedanism would be universal and great. I have already intimated the prince's willingness that his children should be taught the language and learning of England. A school for those branches would doubtless be very popular among the higher classes in Tebriz, and the Scriptures might be used in it as a class-book without objection. But it is questionable whether, as soon as it was discovered that the pupils were receiving a bias in favour of our religion, every one would not be withdrawn. It is doubted whether any Persian would knowingly allow his child to imbibe partialities for Christianity. A convert to Christianity would probably, we were assured, in any other part of Persia, suffer the penalty of the Mohammedan law; but in this province the proba-

bility is that he would not. The mollahs would indeed do their best to influence the people against him, but they are hardly enough respected to be able to create any dangerous expression of popular wrath. The prince would be likely to protect him.

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## LETTER XIX.

### FROM TEBRIZ TO SALMAS.

Route proposed—Leave Tebriz—Sahalán—Condition of the peasantry—Deezeh-khaleel—Inhospitality—A Sabbath in Ramadán—Shehwály—Lake of Oormiah—District of Günieh—Salt plains—Dilmán—Van and Aghtamár—Khósrova, a Chaldean village—Modern origin of the Chaldean sect—Chaldeans of these parts—Their political condition—Their religious rites—State of papal missions in Persia—Pretender to the throne of Georgia—Excursion to Old Salmás—The Jews of these parts—A Chaldean wedding.

DEAR SIR,

OUR instructions directed our attention to the Nestorian and Chaldean Christians of Kürdistán, and a deep interest in those almost unknown sects made us determine from the first, if possible, to visit them. Supposing also, from the fact that El Koosh, near Mosul, has long been the seat of the oldest patriarchate of the former, while the spiritual head of the latter resides at Diarbekr, that they would be most accessible from the southern side of the Kürdish mountains, we proposed likewise to pass through Mesopotamia. Especially, as we should thus comply with another item of our instructions, which suggested the possibility of our finding it expedient to return by way of Syria. Tebriz was fixed upon as the best place for obtaining information to direct us in the accomplishment of this part of our tour. We here had confirmed, what had previously been told us, that the only practicable route for penetrating into Mesopotamia is by way of Bagdád. But disease had already detained us from arriving in those warm regions so early in the cool season as was desirable, and we were informed, from authentic sources, that civil dissensions had hedged up even that route. The pashá of Bagdád having not only refused to send his regular con-



tribution to the sultán, but slain an officer who had come to exact it, had been declared a rebel, and an army was marching from the neighbouring pashaliks of Diarbekr and Aleppo to reduce him. In these circumstances, not only was the rebel pashá using the greatest vigilance to prevent even letters from conveying in that direction any information of the state of the city, but the Yezedies, near Mosul, absolved from fear of the old government, and not yet submitted to the new, were committing the most daring outrages upon all who passed; and even under the walls of Bagdád, so great was the disorder, that robberies were frequent.

To proceed with such prospects would be the extreme of imprudence, and we therefore wrote to Bagdád for the latest information, and turned our attention to the Nestorians and Chaldeans on this side of Kürdistán. The English at Tebriz confessed an almost entire ignorance of their religious doctrines and character, and no one at that place could give us much information respecting them. Almost the only important fact we learned was, that a considerable body of Nestorians were accessible in the provinces of Oormiah and Salmás; and, my health being sufficiently restored by the last of winter to allow of travelling again, we determined to visit them. In order not to go and return by the same route, we concluded to make the circuit of the lake of Oormiah. The government, at the solicitation of the acting envoy, furnished us with a *rákam*, or passport, containing an order for the local authorities to pay us every necessary attention, and give us guards if we should need them. And Capt. Campbell and Maj. Willock supplied us with recommendatory letters to the chief officers and khans of Oormiah, Marágha, and one or two other places.

We started on the morning of the 4th of March. To find myself again on horseback, after so long a confinement, was not a little exhilarating, and feelings of restored strength made me regardless of the piercing wind of a bleak March morning. We crossed the river Ajy by a brick bridge of several arches, and a gravelly plain, white in spots with salt, extended thence to Shahálán, where we stopped at half-past 12, three fúrsakhs from Tebriz. It was a small village of only 40 houses, and surrounded by a ruined mud wall. All its inhabitants, like those of every village around, were moslems; and, the sun being obscured by clouds, they came every ten or fifteen minutes, for at least two hours before sunset, to know from our watches if the time drew near when,



by the laws of the *Ramadán*, they were allowed to eat. We were the guests of the *kétkhoda*, or lord of the village. Having observed, on arriving, that most of the terraces were arched instead of being flat, as usual, we inquired the reason. He informed us that the timbers which formerly supported them were burnt by the Russians, and in the absence of any others to supply their place, it was found necessary to construct arches of unburnt bricks. In this woodless region beams for a terrace are a rare and choice article. A species of poplar is cultivated in most villages for the purpose, being planted, like the *sinjid*, along the margin of canals.

Our host informed us that his village was the property of a *khan*, to whom and to government its inhabitants pay three-tenths of their produce. We afterward learned from an intelligent gentleman, that the law of the land imposes upon all peasants a tax of two-tenths of what they reap from their fields; if freeholders, as not a few are, the remainder is their own; if not, one-tenth more is given to the proprietor. The latter cannot increase his demands, nor can he remove any peasants from their farms. The peasant, however, to escape illegal exactions, often flees, of his own accord, to the soil of some other proprietor, and there receives land, protection, and freedom from rent for a certain number of years. A powerful check is thus imposed upon oppression. Other taxes are exacted by government. A peasant in another village stated them to be, for his townsmen, two *reáls* (about 75 cents) for every house, ox, cow, and buffalo; one *penabád* (about 15 cents) for every sheep; one *reál* for every house; a capitation tax of six *reáls* for every male over sixteen; and a certain sum for every fruit tree in their gardens, and every *batmán* (a square measure) of ground in their vineyards. The gentleman just mentioned declared that the peasants of Persia are placed by the laws in a more eligible situation than those of any state of Europe, and that little distinction is made between Christians and moslems, the former not being forbidden to wear arms, nor, in their own villages at least, meeting with any hindrance to the building of churches. Another gentleman confirmed the opinion that the laws are very mild; but said, what our own observation every where confirmed, that their *mal-administration* and the abuses of under officers now grind the peasant to the dust. From *Aderbaiján*, for example, the whole of the tribute demanded by government is six or seven hundred thousand *tománs*; but the collection of it is so universally embraced



as an occasion for filling the pockets of every officer through whose hands it passes, from the lowest collector to the minister around the throne, that fifteen hundred thousand are supposed to be actually exacted. Though oppressive rulers deprive the subject of his money, however, the want of a police leaves him the full enjoyment of what, in some countries, seems to be almost as highly prized. The *liberty of speech* is fully enjoyed; and every one seems to vituperate his ruler with almost as little scruple as he does his neighbour.

*March 5.* From Sahalán to Deezezh-khaleel we took a circuitous road along the foot of the mountains on the northern side of the great plain of Tebriz, and found it tolerably dry. On another occasion we pursued a more direct route from the bridge through Alvár and Aly-shah, and were much impeded by mud. Indeed the plain, as viewed from Deezezh-khaleel, appears, in the vicinity of the lake to the south, to be a marsh. To-day all the mountains around were white to their base with snow which had fallen in the night, and high and piercing winds occasionally brought over us some of the snow squalls which still lingered upon their tops. In the latter part of our ride, we passed at a distance, first on the right and then on the left, a number of villages, some of which appeared large and flourishing. In their vicinity were many fields of the grain of this year, and the dry cotton of last, but most of the plain was fallow. Nothing is cultivated without irrigation, and for that every field is divided into small patches, like ponds, a rod or two square. On entering Deezezh-khaleel the road became enclosed between mud walls from ten to fifteen feet high. In the outskirts they surrounded extensive fruit gardens, in which, besides now and then a house, could be discovered through an occasional opening, the apple, pear, peach, and vine. The latter had been left exposed the whole winter. The same high walls throughout the village concealed almost every thing from our view, and only a small hole occasionally indicated the existence of a house within. Such are most of the respectable villages in this part of Persia.

We had sent Antonio forward to request a room of the kék-hoda, but, after travelling through street after street without meeting hardly an individual, we almost despaired of finding him. At length a number of boys were seen peeping slyly around the corners of the streets, and dodging away as if a wild beast or some



other fearful object of curiosity were there. It was Antonio, who had been told that the k  tkhoda was not at home, and then conducted to a stable for lodgings. Our r  kam had been shewn, and boys paid to guide him to the house of the k  tkhoda in vain. They led him only to a house without an inhabitant. A few words from us procured a guide to the k  tkhoda's; but he was not to be found, and a boy at the door hesitated to admit us. We passed him, and found an elder brother within, who, seeing us fairly entered, apologized for the other's incivility, confessed that his father was the k  tkhoda, conducted us to a comfortable upper room, spread it immediately with carpets, brought a dish of fine apples for a *peshk  sh* (present), and offered the house for our own, and himself for our servant. The father soon came, but denied at once that he was the k  tkhoda, and called his son a foolish boy for saying he was. He soon inquired of Antonio if our r  kam ordered the village to bear our expenses. The reply, that we intended to pay for every thing, immediately changed his tone; we might stay as long as we pleased, every thing we called for was a present, and no one could tell how he loved us. He hesitated not to acknowledge that he was the k  tkhoda.

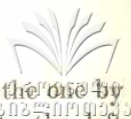
The mystery was now explained. The sight of our r  kam, which Antonio had incautiously shewn at first, had given the impression that he perhaps was a mihmand  r, and that we were to be quartered gratuitously upon the village, the Persian government being in the habit of procuring thus a forced hospitality for travellers. Deezeh-khaleel is the name of the two villages separated only by a wall, and each afraid to receive us, had sent Antonio from one to the other. We had ourselves been sent, by the affrighted inhabitants of Khaleel, over to their neighbours of Deezeh. You need not a word from us to understand the faults of a government, and the misery of a people, where an oppressor is thus feared in every passing traveller. This is but one instance out of many of a similar reception. At Aly-shah, a large and respectable village, we laboured an hour and a half, on our return, before any one would admit us. In order to manage the thing properly, Mr. Dwight went forward upon that occasion to look for lodgings. The k  tkhoda was not to be found. Offers to pay for our lodgings were of no avail; not even a stable could be procured. And though the public square, on Mr. Dwight's arrival, was full of gay inhabitants celebrating the *Nor  z*, the greatest festival of the Persians,



his appearance dispersed them so suddenly, that when I came up hardly an individual appeared in the streets.—Deezeh-khaleel contains 400 or 500 houses, and is inhabited entirely by moslems. They are freeholders, but are appropriated to a high officer, who is ordered by government to obtain his salary from them. Villages seem to be often given thus to particular individuals in Persia, and from the practice, doubtless, arises much of the oppression experienced by the peasantry.

*March 6.* We spent a quiet Sabbath at Deezeh-khaleel. The atmosphere, purified by the squalls of yesterday, was delightfully serene, and we enjoyed much a walk in the fields. Occasionally a keen breath of air came down from the snowy mountains on the north; but only enough to make grateful the warm rays of the sun, which fell through a cloudless sky upon the broad plain to the south. The fields had the quietness of the same holy day at home, as if even the moslems around us had been seized with reverence for the sacredness of the Christian Sabbath. The cause, however, was different. The Ramadán had taken away for the present their strength and inclination for labour. Our house was not altogether so quiet. Last night, before we were aware, and while we were dining by his side, our host began a session of his court, seated upon my bed. Before it was finished, a hint that we were sleepy, caused him to adjourn. On rising to-day, we found him with his neighbours, holding the balance of justice, upon the ground in the street before his door. The cold soon forced them into the stable; and from thence loud and boisterous voices, elicited by the progress of the cause, were ascending all the morning.—He informed us that his father lived to the age of 120 years. The prince, on hearing of his extreme longevity, caused him to visit him at Tebriz, and place his hand upon his head, hoping thereby himself to reach the same age; such an effect being commonly ascribed to the imposition of the hands of an aged man. The anecdote reminded me of Jacob's interview with Pharaoh; and suggested the query, whether such a ceremony and idea may not explain the singular circumstance, that a plain shepherd should *bless* a powerful king.

*March 7.* Our day's ride was from Deezeh-khaleel to Shehwály, a distance of four fúrsakhs. The country had an undulating and gravelly surface, and gradually declined from the mountain on the right to the lake, which was not far off, on the left. A number of villages appeared in different directions. A mile or two from



Shehwály, a road branches off toward Khoy. It was the one by which we had first reached Tebriz. We now turned to the left toward Salmás. The same difficulties in finding lodgings were experienced again to-day. To avoid them, I went forward myself. The kékthoda as usual was not to be found, and a stable was offered for our lodgings. I pleaded mildly, and offered to pay well for a better room, but a bold and absolute refusal was the only answer. The rákam was then shewn, and more authoritative language used, but a milder refusal was the only effect. At length a young man, pretending to have learned, from a perusal of the rákam, that we were distinguished characters, came forward with a smiling face to apologize for the incivility of his townsmen, and to offer us excellent lodgings. He conducted us to the same stable! We had begun to doubt whether, in so miserable a little village, we could do better, and therefore, responding to his smile, accepted his offer. All were at once on the best terms with us, and the whole village was so glad to see us disposed of with no more inconvenience to themselves, that whatever we wanted was immediately at our command. The fact that we found these difficulties only in moslem villages, and that offers of money did not in every case remove them, seems to shew that they are connected with a fear of ceremonial defilement, as well as an apprehension of expense. In one case, an old moslem host sat constantly by us, to see that we did not drink wine, and drop it upon his carpets.

Shehwály being but a few rods from the lake of Oormiah (called also Shahy lake), we rode down to its shore in the afternoon. Its water was exceedingly saline, and some salt was deposited in crevices of the rocks along its margin. No unusual taste was perceptible, but it is said to have a medicinal effect; and the fact that no fish of any kind inhabit the lake, indicates the presence of some unusual ingredients. It is no where more than a few feet in depth, and is without an outlet. A few boats are said to ply upon it between Oormiah and Marágha. The island upon which Hoolakoo built the castle for his treasures, appears distinctly from Shehwály. Other islands also rise out of its tranquil waters, and with the lofty mountains around, contribute to form a beautiful landscape. The lake of Oormiah is remarkable for the alluvial plains which surround it. They extend up between the mountains like bays, and their appearance suggests the inquiry, whether they were not once covered with water. We have already viewed the plain of



Tebriz. Another lies on the north, where we now were, between the lake and the pass in the mountains through which we came from Khoy. Its extent is not great, but in the vicinity of the mountains it is fertile, and contains a number of villages. The principal is Tesooch, or Tesý. We passed through it twice on other occasions. It exhibits many ruins indicative of former consequence, among which are two old and well built mosques. At present its inhabitants seem to be few, but it is the capital of a district called Günieh, which, besides this plain, extends far enough to embrace also Deezezh-khaleel, a distance of five or six fúrsakhs. Its site is upon the level plain, but the other villages appear upon the foot of the mountains, with their fields and gardens reaching from them toward the lake, until the soil becomes too much impregnated with salt to allow of cultivation.—No Armenians inhabit the district of Günieh.

*March 8.* We rode around the northern extremity of the lake. Myriads of large ducks were flying over it, swimming upon its surface, and wading in the salt marshes upon its shore. The flat over which we travelled was white in almost every part, with an incrustation of salt, which had exuded from its surface. The quantity was here unusually great, but similar appearances in these parts are extremely frequent. I have already mentioned instances in the valley of the Aras, and in the plain of Tebriz. Repeatedly were we disappointed on reaching a limpid brook, to find it too strongly impregnated with saline matter to quench our thirst. This plain is nearly destitute of running water. As a substitute, not only for drinking, but for irrigation (without which nothing is cultivated), the villagers save in successive tanks the water that is brought down by winter torrents from the mountains. To avoid, I suppose, its being impregnated with the mineral properties of the soil, it is conducted from the reservoirs to the villages, in covered canals sunk eight or ten feet under ground. Their course is marked by a succession of open wells, only a rod or two apart, descending to the water. A ride of four fúrsakhs brought us to Khanadán, at the north-west corner of the lake. It is the last spot in the district of Günieh. The village was out of sight in some ravine of the mountains; and only a shop stood by the road for the convenience of travellers.

Here another plain extended westward from the lake, like that of Tebriz toward the east. It was the district of Salmás. Moun-



tains surround it on three sides, and the part nearest the shore is, for some distance, marshy. We took a direction toward its southwest corner, from the gravelly elevation around Khanadán; and again entered ancient Armenia, for Salmás was embraced within its limits. The first village was three fúrsakhs distant, and before we reached it no cultivation appeared, much of the surface being white with salt. Beyond, the soil assumed an aspect of great fertility, and was highly cultivated throughout. One fúrsakh more brought us to Dilmán, the present capital of the province, and finished our day's ride of eight fúrsakhs. Finding no comfortable room in the caravanserai, we sent Antonio to solicit lodgings from the governor. Some refused to shew him the house, others gave him a wrong direction; and when he at last found it, the governor was not at home. A merchant in the bazár, in the mean time, invited us to be seated by him, and, while a number, attracted by curiosity, gathered around, began to question us respecting the movements of Abbas Mirza, and our own object in travelling. We learned that there were then several agents of the prince in town, exacting money and soldiers from its inhabitants. At Deezeh-khaleel, too, the cause of the kékkhoda's court was the imposition of a new tax. And strange as it may seem that we could be imagined to have any connection with government, it is possible that a vague fear lest some additional imposition should follow in our train, increased the universal reluctance to receive us. The return of Antonio seemed to place us in the alternative of creeping into a dirty hole in the caravanserai, or of sleeping in the street. We appealed to a crowd around to know if they would suffer strangers to fare thus, and one stepped forward to offer us lodgings in his house. His room was good, and the entertainment he gave us generous.

Dilmán is a market town, fortified by a regular mud wall. Its houses are six or seven hundred in number, all built of mud, and inhabited only by moslems. Salmás, with a part of the neighbouring province of Khoy, is the seat of one of the pastoral tribes of Persia called *Lek*. Their language is the Turkish, and their faith the sheey. A khan of their race is governor of Dilmán, and of the district of which it is the capital.—A road leads from this place to Van, a distance of about 24 fúrsakhs, which is frequently travelled by small caravans without danger. Another leads from Tebriz to the same place by Khoy, and is not far from the same length. We



wished to return to Erzroom by way of Van, and were prevented only by the information that robbers beset the road between those places. We regretted our disappointment the more, as Van is said to be in the centre of a fine province, which contains a great number of Armenians. It is the residence of a Turkish pashá of three tails. The vicinity also of the Catholicos of Aghtamár increases a missionary's interest in it. Saint Martin is mistaken in affirming that he is of the Greek faith. The branch of the Armenian church of which he is the head, is in regular communion with the others. His diocese, however, is extremely small. Bishop Israel, of Tebriz, affirmed, that it is limited to the island in which he resides. But the secretary of the Catholicos at Echmiádzin assured us, that some districts in the Kürdish mountains also acknowledge his supremacy.

*March 9.* We rode to Khósrova, a Chaldean village about two miles from Dilmán.—The present Chaldean Christians are of recent origin. It was in A.D. 1681, that the Nestorian metropolitan of Diarbekr, having quarrelled with his patriarch, was first consecrated by the pope patriarch of the Chaldeans. The sect was as new as the office, and was created for it. Converts to papacy from the Nestorian and Jacobite churches were united in one body, and dignified by the name of the Chaldean church. It means no more than papal Syrians; as we have in other parts papal Armenians, and papal Greek. The name of the first patriarch happened to be *Yoosuf* (Joseph), the same was assumed by his successors, and a *Mar Yoosuf* now occupies the see of Diarbekr, as patriarch of the Chaldeans.\* Khósrova is the residence of the bishop of all who are on this side of the Kürdish mountains. As we rode up to his house, an old man with a long Kürdish cap, green turban, and ragged sheep-skin pelisse, came out to welcome us. It was Mar Yohanna, the bishop. He received us civilly, but being too poor to lodge us, he referred us to his priest for a room.

The bishop having been educated at Rome, and lived some time at Aleppo, Mosul, and Bagdád, spoke both Italian and Arabic with considerable fluency. Bishop's orders were conferred upon him by the pope's vicar at Bagdád in consequence of instructions from Rome. He seemed, perhaps from age, to be possessed of little energy or intelligence, and evidently dependant for every thing upon his priest. The priest, too, though a native of the village,

\* Assemani Bib. Orient. vol. 3, p. 623. Niebuhr, Voy. en Arab. vol. 2, p. 328.



had been twelve years in the college of the Propaganda at Rome. He spoke Italian with ease, and being very communicative, answered our questions with readiness. We afterward found that his information respecting the Nestorians was strongly tinged by his prejudices against them. The bishop's was still more so; and we learned to distrust whatever they said of that sect. Both of them were given to profaneness, and an oath, or some similar expression, often slipped from their tongues. The priest informed us, that the inhabitants of this village are all Chaldeans, and are only 150 families in number; though another man, who said he had a list of them, affirmed that they amount to 170 families. They are indigenus to the spot, and were converted from the Nestorian to the papal church about a century ago. In the other villages of the province of Salmás, there are but few of their sect. Oola contains 26 families, Gooleza 20, Patavor 15, Khaghia 7, and 6 are scattered elsewhere. In the province of Oormiah they reckon about 200 families, most of whom are in the village of Barbary. Add about 30 families who emigrated from this vicinity with the Russians to Sharoor, in the province of Eriván, and (if the statements of the priests are correct) you have a complete list of all the Chaldeans of these parts, amounting to about 2300 souls. They have, in all, but four priests besides our informant, three of whom are in the province of Oormiah, and one here; and none but him has had any other than a native education. The diocese acknowledges the supremacy of the Chaldean patriarch at Diarbekr, and occasionally receives orders from thence, but pays him no money.\*

Besides the diocesan, a second bishop also resides at Khósrova. Being, according to the laws of Nestorian episcopal succession, heir to the diocese, he resented being supplanted by another, and when Mar Yohanna went to Bagdád for consecration, he obtained the same right from the Nestorian Mar Shimón of the mountains. An excommunication was fulminated against him in consequence, but by going to Bagdád and lining well the pockets of the pope's vicar there, he got a favourable representation of his case made to

\* The following was given us by the nephew of Bishop Shevris, of whom more will be said hereafter, as a complete list of the present Chaldean bishops:—Mar Basilius, at Diarbekr; Mar Michael, at Sert; Mar Ignatius, at Mardin; Mar Lorentius, at Ain Kawa, near Bagdád; Mar Yohanna, and Mar Yoosuf, at El Koosh; Mar Yohanna, at Khósrova.—The title *Mar*, which seems to be common to all Chaldean, Nestorian, and Jacobite bishops, is equivalent to *lord*.



Rome, and retained the rank of sub-bishop in this diocese. "And here he has been," said Mar Yohanna, our informant, "for many, many years, and as often as I have said *white*, he has invariably said *black*." The priest, too, regarded him with extreme contempt, and repeatedly amused himself by calling him *semivirumque bovem*.—There was also, till recently, another Chaldean bishop, by the name of Shevris, in this region, but, I believe, without a diocese. He was a native of Sert, and was consecrated bishop by Mar Elias, of El Koosh, without orders from the pope. To effect a compromise for such an irregularity, he went to Rome in person, and resided there twelve years. "Then," said the old bishop, our informant again, "he came here and connected himself with the Bible Society, from which he received a large annual pension." He seemed prejudiced against him, and called him "*un matto*;" but still affirmed that he died in the bosom of the papal church. The fact that he was always a firm papist, was declared not only by several Chaldeans and Nestorians, but by a nephew of Shevris himself, who will be mentioned hereafter. The British and Foreign Bible Society employed him to translate the New Testament into the Kùrdish language, and the work is now in the hands of the missionaries at Shoosha for revision. An English gentleman at Tebriz, who knew Shevris well, had already expressed to us an apprehension that he had done his work like a hireling. The priest here affirmed that it could be of no use, as he had written it in the Nestorian character, which, besides being entirely unknown to the Kùrds, is ill adapted to express the sounds of their language. Undoubtedly, as the Kùrds have no alphabet of their own, and are as moslems more or less familiar with the Korán, to say nothing of the languages of the Turks and Persians who surround them, the Arabic alphabet ought to have been used. The translation, however, will doubtless be worth something as a first attempt, and will be an important help to missionaries who may wish to learn the Kùrdish language. He died at Tebriz, of the epidemic, during the last season.

We were hardly seated with the bishop and his priest, before two litigants, with a crowd at their heels, rushed in to plead a cause before the episcopal tribunal. Both were angry and obstinate, and, upheld by their friends, put the reverend judge to his wit's end to pacify them. His consultations with his priest, being held in Italian, that they might not be comprehended by the



people, were of course understood by us; and the latter, fearing that we might detect some machiavelism, deemed it necessary, in the sequel, to apologize. He said that such were the habits of the people, and the nature of moslem law, that to tell the plain truth did no good; quibbles and expedients were necessary. Such a state of things was exceedingly painful to him, but the people must be satisfied, or they would appeal to the Mohammedan authorities. —The inhabitants of the village, he informed us, own the soil they cultivate. Though so hedged in by surrounding villages, that their possessions are small, they pay a tax of 1000 tománs (about 3000 dollars) in money, and about half that amount in grain! Nor, though fixed by charters, is this all; through illegal exactions from collectors, and the imposition of unjust fines, they actually give much more. Even mechanics, of whom there are only a few weavers, cannot exercise their trade without paying for a license. In fact, he said, they are drained of every farthing they can earn. That they were extremely poor, their external appearance abundantly testified. Their oppression has increased since the war. — Only some twenty or thirty can read, and they have been taught since the priest came here, that they might assist him in church. Besides the few taught by him, the Chaldeans have no school here or elsewhere in this region.

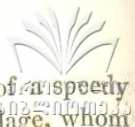
We attended evening prayers in the church. It was an old stone structure, ornamented within by a multitude of coarse shawls and Roman pictures hung around its walls, and its interior was extremely dark. Like the common Armenian churches, its floor was strown with sheep-skins and bits of rugs; and each one, as he entered, left his shoes at the door, and placed himself upon one of them. Few were present; the service was read and chanted with great rapidity; and I think I never saw so little reverence, and so much carelessness in divine worship. In form it resembled that of the Nestorians, which will be hereafter described. In fact, all the Nestorian church books are used by the Chaldeans, with scarcely any other alteration than the substitution of the names of papal for those of Nestorian saints, and the expunging of a few sentences that savor of Nestorianism. The priest seemed to think, that, in conformity with the name of his church, its books must in ancient times have been written in the Chaldean character, but confessed that at present it possesses no such books, and only uses the Nestorian character, with now and then an old manuscript in the



Estrangelo. Only the Scripture lessons in the public services are explained in the vulgar tongue. None of the other parts, according to the confession of the priest, are understood by the people. The Chaldeans not only regulate the time of their fasts and feasts by the oriental calendar, but observe the former with all the strictness of the Nestorians, eating no kind of animal food, and in Lent abstaining from every thing until afternoon. Their priests, like those of the papal Greeks and Maronites of Syria, are allowed to marry before ordination, but not after. Like good papists, they receive only the bread at communion.

This is now the only papal mission in Aderbaiján, nor did we learn of any other in all Persia, except at Isfahán.\* The priest said that he formerly received from Rome an annual remittance of a hundred dollars, but for the last two or three years no money had been sent, and he could not even get an answer to his letters. Such neglect provoked from him many bitter complaints; and he declared, that his two brethren at Isfahán had written to him that they were in the same predicament, almost starving for want of money. How curtailed are the finances and the influence of Rome, since the time when Chardin found Augustinians, Capuchins, Carmelites, and Jesuits, living at such ease in the capital of Persia! Let her continue thus to sink elsewhere, and soon will that great city be found no more at all. We seem, throughout this journey, to have been treading upon her ruins; and I confess that one of the most pleasing reflections it has occasioned me, is, that we have found so many of them completely buried in the dust. The priest complained that his embarrassment for want of funds deprived him of all energy for his missionary labours. He was anxious to multiply books in the vulgar language, but had yet only translated the *Doctrina Christiana* (a papal catechism), and a few prayers, for his pupils. They are the only books that exist in the vulgar language of the Nestorians. We obtained copies of them, and of a Nestoriano-Turkish catechism. He had projected also a work upon the Nestorians, but I apprehend it would be little more than an abridgment of Asseman, whom he owned, and followed closely in the information he gave us. As the result of his labours hitherto, he mentioned the twenty or thirty youths here whom he had taught to read, and the Chaldeans in the villages around who

\* Chardin found two Capuchins at Tebriz (vol. 2, p. 344), but their hospice has long since ceased to exist.



had been converted by him. He was in expectation of a speedy reinforcement from Rome; two young men of the village, whom he had sent thither for education, being about ready to return.

I have already mentioned that one of the heirs to the last waly of Georgia, is supported by the Persian government, as a pretender to the throne of that country. He resides in this village, and we called on him after evening prayers. So rejoiced was he to see us, if we may credit his own expressions, that our visit was worth to him more than a hundred thousand tománs; and offers of services, hardly one of which it was in his power to perform, were heaped upon us in such profusion, that we were put to our wit's end for civil excuses to decline them all. It was Persian politeness carried to the most disgusting excess. The kings of Imireti, and the princes of Mingreli, he informed us, were his relatives, and his ancestors were of the Pakradian family. His wekeel added, that the Pakradians were of the royal family and lineage of David, the son of Jesse. He bears the name and title of Alexander khan, and lives upon a pension of about a thousand tománs which he is ordered by government to take from the taxes of this village. Weakness and generosity of character make him too improvident to manage his own income, and among the Georgian dependants who form his court, is an Armenian khan, named Aghalár, a native of Georgia, who acts as his wekeel. We exchanged calls with him also, and afterward learned that he is brother of a eunuch who now controls the cabinet of Teherán. *He* has no lack of sense, nor of providence, and of course fares better than his master.


*March 10.* Taking a Chaldean guide from Khósrova, we made an excursion this morning to Old Salmas, now generally called simply *Shehir*, or the city. The plain continued of the same character as was noticed at the first village on entering the district. Level almost as the floor of a house, with a soil of rich light loam, and irrigated throughout with canals, it presented a landscape truly charming. Cotton and rice do not flourish here, and only grain is cultivated; but with that almost every spot was green. Our guide assured us that it produces from eight to twelve, and in some places fifteen fold. Numerous villages appeared, and all were surrounded, like Khósrova, with forests of fruit trees, which seem to flourish here with almost unequalled exuberance. The apple, pear, quince, peach, apricot, walnut, and sinjid, were the principal. Through gardens thickly set with these, we worked our way into



Saora, a village on the road. Our guide assured us that five or six hundred families of Armenians had emigrated from it to Georgia, and that only a few of that nation, with a few moslems, were left. We found the Chaldean church in the keeping of a solitary family of that sect. Its door was a mere elliptical hole cut through a single stone, and so small as to admit one's body with difficulty. Within were three small chapels under the same roof, dark and dirty, and without furniture, except a few old shawls and Romish pictures suspended upon the walls. No books even were to be found, and the keeper said the clergy brought them from Khósrova when they came to say mass on the great festivals.

Salmás is mentioned by ancient writers as a town in the Armenian province of Persarmenia.\* The modern village is scattered over a considerable space, on the site of the old one. Its houses are poor, and it has an aspect of decay. The only remains of antiquity we saw, were two or three cylindrical monuments or towers of an order similar to that at Shamkór, but much inferior in height. They were constructed of brick, and marked with inscriptions in the Arabic character, betraying a moslem origin. The plain extends hardly more than a mile south-westward from the town, and then commence the semi-independent mountains of the Kürds. Though so near that lawless people, however, the district is never disturbed by them, except when the Persian government is in a weak and disorganized state.—The entrance to the Chaldean church was like that just mentioned at Saora, and its interior was in a similar state, except that it contained three or four old books, one of which was written in the Estrangelo character upon parchment. There being no Chaldean or Nestorian in town, the key was kept by an old Armenian. Still, the clergy come from Khósrova to say mass in it upon the great festivals. Among other ancient inscriptions upon the stones in the external face of its walls, we noticed one in a character entirely unknown to us.—We found the Jewish synagogue neater and better carpeted than the churches; and the Jews better dressed than the Christians. Their copies of the law were beautiful, and we tried to purchase one, but in vain. They reckon 30 or 35 families here; in Oormiah they amount to 300 families; and in Khoy, I believe, there are a few; but elsewhere in Aderbaiján we heard of none. In Teherán, Kashán, and Isfahán, they are more numerous. The priest at Khósrova said that

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 179.



these of Salmás are doubtless much oppressed, but less so than his own townsmen; for not being cultivators of the soil, their property is not so tangible. Their appearance seemed to justify his opinion. The Jews of Persia generally are the most ignorant, demoralized, and oppressed part of the community. They are said to have neither tradition nor history to inform them when their ancestors came into the country. We naturally look among them for the remains of the ten tribes; but if such were their origin, all traces of it have been effaced. They now resemble their brethren elsewhere, except that their reverence for the Talmud is perhaps somewhat less, and there is some doubt whether they have all the books of the Old Testament. This resemblance may have been produced by long intercourse with Jerusalem Rabbies, who often pass by them on their way to the north. We found one at Salmás, at the time of our visit. They speak the languages of the country; but respecting the common use of a vulgar Hebrew among them, we received contradictory statements.—The Armenian church bore marks of great poverty, and was probably stripped of its furniture and ornaments at the time of the emigration. Upon that occasion, we were assured, 200 families left the town. Only 20 remained, and 40 have since joined them, so that their present number is 60. In the whole district there are now but about 400 families of Armenians. They have no school, nor had they any before the war.

We returned to Khósrova in time to attend a Chaldean wedding. It was a nephew of the priest, with whom he lives, that was married, and we therefore had the best chance of viewing all the ceremonies of the occasion. Our host, both because as a priest he had long endeavoured to discountenance the frolickings of his parishioners, and because his nephew was a widower with a family of children, as well as to avoid expense, wished, he said, to have little parade. The friends of the bride prevailed, however, and the wedding took place with some eclat. Yesterday, the bridegroom uncovered a large jar of wine in his yard (which, according to the manner of keeping wine here, was buried a foot or two in the ground), and slew a cow also before our door. The whole of the beef, and large quantities of wine, with butter and rice, were sent to the house of the bride for the wedding feast. The wine was in the greatest demand, and jars were repeatedly filled and sent away, or drunk on the spot, as if it had been water. To stain the hands



and feet of the bride, a dish of *henna*, too, was furnished by the bridegroom. It was applied in the evening by an assembly of women, who had a feast upon the occasion, with music and dancing. The priest would not provide the latter, and the expense of it was borne by the father of the girl. The expense of marrying is here so great, that a contribution is generally taken up for the bridegroom through the village; otherwise few young men would be able to marry. The nephew of the priest had already once received this favour at his former marriage, however, and he could not solicit it of his townsmen again. But we were not thus excused from the solicitation, and in the course of to-day the bride sent us, by the hand of a maid, a tray of pears and lavender. Its meaning was easily understood, and, hoping thereby to discharge some of our obligations to our host, we put into the hand of the bearer a small coin. It afterward appeared that the purses of the espoused parties were not yet united, and this was only a trick of the girl's father to sponge us of some money.

Late in the afternoon to-day, a company of musicians and dancers carried from the bridegroom to the bride the present of her wedding dress. The bridegroom remained at home; we anticipated the slow movements of the musical procession, and arrived before them. Along the side of a large room were seated upon the ground, in all the mirth of boisterous conviviality, a row of men, with trays of bread and fruit before them, and waiters passing goblets of wine rapidly around. Their noise ceased for a moment as we entered, and they rose respectfully to receive us. In a corner of the same room was huddled also upon the ground, a crowd of women. Against the wall were three or four entirely covered with veils, indicating that they had been married within the year. Between them appeared the bride, also with a veil, but without the flat dish that crowned the heads of the married women. Near them sat one or two with unveiled faces, except that the chin was well muffled to the nose, and a red shawl was thrown over their head to shew that they were married the year before. The mass of the married dames had likewise the lower part of the visage concealed in a muffler, but a white instead of a red shawl upon the head, betokened that they were matrons of some standing. A complement of unmarried maidens, having their faces entirely naked, and nothing upon their heads but a tight cap, from which dangled an



abundance of gold and silver coins, completed the crowd. These were the relatives of the bride.

The relatives of the bridegroom soon came with the wedding dress, and filled the room. The bride was clothed where she sat, but the crowd of women around, completely screened her from the gaze of the men. The latter were otherwise employed; for the trays were now loaded with dishes of various kinds of food, which, with large draughts of wine, they hastened to dispatch. The uproar, from loud talk, music, and quarrelling, soon increased to a deafening and almost fearful height. The bridegroom had given a large dowry at the espousals; but custom required an additional present, also, at the marriage, to the father, brothers, and nearest relations. So exorbitant were their demands on this score to-day, that the priest had already been forced to refer them to court for a decision. Provoked by this, and half drunk with wine, the father was exceedingly waspish, and vented his wrath in words and actions, which we at one time expected would actually end in blows. The dress-maker, too, clamorously demanded her fee, and a present was claimed in high terms by all who had aided in dressing the bride, among whom the girl who had tied her zone made herself the most conspicuous. The bride was at length equipped, and having, with many pretended or real tears given the farewell kiss to her parents and relatives, was conducted slowly to the door. There a horse was waiting for her, and as she mounted, an infant boy was seated in her lap upon the saddle, to augur the felicitous result of such an offspring. Then, preceded by music and dancing, and attended by an immense crowd, many of whom were well in their cups, she marched slowly to the house of the bridegroom.

We took a shorter road, and arrived before them. At the first sign of her coming, the bridegroom, who had remained at home, mounted his terrace with a few of his friends. As she drew near, one held a tray of fruit before him, and another poured goblets of wine down his throat, all shouting at every draught. A lump of butter was brought the bride, which she stuck upon the door-post as she entered, to signify that her coming brought plenty and fruitfulness to the house. The last of the demands made, in accordance with marriage customs here, upon the purse of the poor bridegroom, was now met by a promise to her of a new dress, before



she would be seated. The court was immediately filled with a crowd of men and women, who continued dancing by torch-light to the sound of music, until a late hour. The wine jar was soon reported to be exhausted, although it had contained about 150 bottles. Another of the same size was soon opened, and when we returned from Oormiah, ten days afterward, that too was empty. Tired of such carousals, we retired to our room and to sleep, leaving a request to be awaked to witness the marriage.

We were called an hour after midnight, and hastened to the church, where it was to take place. The espoused parties came with no attendance. At the altar, the friend of the bridegroom and the bridemaïd stood between them, and during the ceremony repeatedly whispered in the ear of each. They were once brought together for a moment to join hands; but the bride held back so resolutely, that the union was not effected without much persuasion, and even force. When together, they were observed to be more intent upon treading on each other's toes, than upon joining hands; for you must know, that whichever had his toes well mashed at that critical moment, was to be obedient to the other through life. A ring was dipped in wine and water by the priest, and given to the bridegroom to be put by him upon the finger of the bride; and the ceremony was consummated by crowning the head of each with a garland. The communion ought to have been given them before leaving the church, and, as a preparation, they had actually been made to confess during the evening; but the priest declared that, after so much drinking and carousing, he would not administer it. Two attendants, with a cymbal and a bell, led the way from the church; the priest and deacon followed them, chanting from their books; and thus the married couple were conducted home.



## LETTER XX.

## OORMIAH.

Origin of Nestorianism—Its establishment in Persia—Origin and extent of the patriarchate of Seleucia and Ctesiphon—Different residences of its patriarchs—Conversions of the Nestorians to the papal church—Origin of the seceding patriarchate of Mar Shimón in the Kúrdish mountains—Our arrival at Jamálava, a Nestorian village in the province of Oormiah—Nestorian fasts—Evening prayers—Bishop Mar Yohanna—Language of the Nestorians—Adoration of the saints—Prayers for the dead—State of the dead before Christ—Independent Nestorians of Kúrdistán—Diocese of Mar Shimón—Diocese of the bishop of Jamálava—Orders of the Nestorian clergy—Their support—Ideas of the way of salvation—Sign of the cross—Number of the Nestorian sacraments—Baptism—Sacred leaven—Eucharist—Mode of communion—Open communion—Marriage—Consecration of churches—Armenian carnival.

DEAR SIR,

IN passing from the Armenian to the Nestorian church, we go backward one step in the history of heresy. Nestorius was excommunicated at Ephesus, by the third general council, A.D. 431; twenty years before Eutyches was condemned by the fourth general council at Chalcedon. You will not expect me to review the transactions of that assembly. They form a page in the history of the church, which a sarcastic Gibbon may take pleasure in unfolding for the scorn of her enemies, but which the Christian will not be reluctant to leave veiled in the darkness of the age in which they occurred. That Nestorius was innocent, I am not disposed to contend; but if he was chargeable with guilt, I should search for it elsewhere than did the council. Its first accusation was, that he refused to the virgin the title of *Mother of God*. Had he pleaded guilty to it, surely no protestant would for that have charged him with heresy. But he did not, for he said, "I have often declared, that if one more simple among you, or any others, is pleased with this word Θεοτόκος, I have no objection to it, so be that he make not the Virgin God."\* It accused him next, of holding not only to two natures, but to *two persons* in Christ. And even had he used such language, no one accustomed to discriminate, will deny, that it *might* have had in his mouth no heretical meaning. But he perseveringly denied the charge to the end of his life. To Cyril, his enemy, he wrote, "I approve that you

\* Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 4, p. 193.



preach a distinction of natures, in respect to the divinity and humanity, and a conjunction of them in one person." And to another prelate he said, "Of the two natures there is one authority, one virtue, one power, and one person according to one dignity."† Nestorius had, on the one point, however, in attempting to penetrate beyond the reach of finite powers into the mystery of the incarnation, darkened counsel by words without knowledge; and on the other, had boldly, and perhaps honestly, endeavoured to correct a popular superstition. The opportunity for humbling the occupant of the see of Constantinople, which had begun to eclipse its sister patriarchates, was too good to be lost; and the envious Cyril of Alexandria delayed not to sound the alarm of heresy. By refusing to wait for the delegates of Antioch (the friends of the accused), he converted the council of Ephesus into an *ex-parte* tribunal, and Nestorius was condemned unheard.

On being cut off from the church, and hurled from the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, Nestorius was first banished to Arabia Petrea; thence, after a four years' residence near Antioch, he was transported to one of the Oases of Libya; and finally died in Upper Egypt. But his cause was the cause of his countrymen in the East, and needed not his presence to secure its progress. Others besides himself had there sat at the feet of Diodorus of Tarsus, and Theodorus of Mopsuestia; and John, patriarch of Antioch, both from partiality to the same opinions, and from chagrin at the neglect shewn him by his brother of Alexandria, at the council of Ephesus, looked with complacence upon the feelings of his flock. Particularly in the famous school of Edessa (now Orfah), where many Christian youth of Persia were educated, was the part of the condemned patriarch warmly espoused. His partisans were indeed expelled from it before the declaration of peace between the sees of Antioch and Alexandria, and the school itself was finally destroyed in A.D. 489, by order of the emperor Zeno. But Ibas, then a presbyter in Edessa, in the mean time excited by his correspondence an interest in the cause among the Persian ecclesiastics; the expelled pupils carried with them to the country of their birth and of their banishment, a still warmer personal sympathy in it; and Barsumas, one of their number, added his influence, both as head of his rival school of Nisibis, and as bishop of that city, to promote it. It was also fostered by the rivalry of the governments of

\* Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 4, p. 192.



Constantinople, and of Persia. For, while the orthodox Nicodorus, and the monophysite Zeno strove alike to exterminate Nestorianism from their realm, Barsumas easily convinced the fire worshipper Firóz, that the persecuted sect would be favourable to his interests, and that the friends of orthodoxy were at heart traitors to his government. The archbishop of Seleucia, either from fear or indifference, stood aloof from the manœuvres of the bishop, and at his death the new sect had so multiplied in his diocese, as to appoint (in A.D. 498) his successor. Thus the Nestorians assumed the attitude of the dominant Christian sect of Persia.\*

The archbishop of Seleucia and Ctesiphon has been already mentioned, as one of the Catholicoses beyond the boundaries of the Greek empire, who originally acknowledged the supremacy of the patriarch of Antioch. The Christians of that diocese claimed Thomas as their apostle, inasmuch as he passed by them on his way to the remoter regions of the East. But their see owed its origin to Maris, a disciple of the Thaddeus to whom the church of Edessa looked up as its founder.† In A.D. 162, long before the diocese was infected with Nestorianism, its occupants had ceased to go for consecration to Antioch, where they were liable to be seized as spies, and had practised receiving the ordinance from the hands of their own bishops.‡ And when the infection of heresy had completely severed their still nominal connection with that patriarchal see, they assumed to themselves the title of Patriarch of the East, as well as the power of spiritually independent heads of the Nestorian church.—The Nestorians did not receive from all the Sassanians such decided protection as from Firóz, and were occasionally persecuted; but even under the religious intolerance of Nooshirwán, their patriarch was the acknowledged head of all the Christians of Persia.§ Under the Arabians, too, though liable, like all Christians, to excessive exactions and repeated persecutions, they were admitted to many offices of trust, and had the precedence of every other body of Christians.||

Their sect was now widely extended. Besides occupying, almost to the exclusion of all other Christians, the region which forms the modern kingdom of Persia; they were on the one side numerous

\* Assemb. Bib. Orient. vol. 4, p. 67, ss.

† Ibid. vol. 3, p. 612; vol. 4, p. 41.

|| Ibid. vol. 4, p. 95.

† Ibid. vol. 4, p. 3; vol. 3, p. 611.

§ Ibid. vol. 4, p. 87, ss.



in Mesopotamia and Arabia, had their metropolitans in Syria and Cyprus, and a bishop even in the island of Socotra, at the mouth of the Red Sea; and on the other, the Syrian Christians of Malabar, in Hindoostán, were Nestorians, and received their bishops from Seleucia. Nestorian churches existed in Transoxiana as far as Kashgar; in the distant regions of Mongolia, the great khan of the Tartars held the rank of presbyter in the Nestorian church; and, if we may credit a monument subsequently discovered by papal priests, Nestorian missionaries planted churches in the heart of northern China.\* In a word, we have on record a list of no less than twenty-five metropolitans, who acknowledged the supremacy of the Nestorian patriarch.†—Their condition was at first improved by the exchange of Saracen for Moghúl masters, at the destruction of the kalifate of Bagdád by Hoolakoo khan, A.D. 1258. For, though the house of Chingiz rose upon the ruins of that of *Prester John* (presbyter Unkh khan), the clerical khan of the Tartars, it was brought, by intermarriages with it, under the influence of its religion. Some of the descendants of the Chingiz openly declared themselves Christians; all were for several generations partial to Christianity; and the branch which invaded Persia, shewed peculiar respect to the head of the Nestorian church. It learned to persecute, however, on embracing the Mohammedan faith; a similar spirit was imbibed by the Moghúls wherever its example was followed; and at length Timoor completed the banishment of Christianity from Transoxiana, exterminated or effectually concealed it in Mongolia, and persecuted unto death multitudes of the Nestorians of Persia.‡

The original residence of the Nestorian patriarchs was at Ctesiphon and Seleucia. When Bagdád became the capital of the Saracen empire, in A.D. 762, they removed thither. The destruction of the court whose favour they there cultivated, broke the tie which connected them with that city, and thenceforward their residence seems to have been constantly varying, until the patriarch Elias, in A.D. 1559, fixed himself at Mosul. His successors have ever since resided in that vicinity, and have also borne his name; and a *Mar Elias* now represents, at El Koosh, the ancient patriarchs of Seleucia and Ctesiphon.§—The modern history of the Nestorians is taken up with the efforts of papal missionaries to

\* Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 4, p. 413, ss.

† Ibid. vol. 4, p. 101, 481.

‡ Ibid. vol. 2, p. 458.

§ Ibid. vol. 4, p. 622.



convert them to the Romish faith. The few that lived in Malabar were gained over as early as A.D. 1445.\* In A.D. 1599, the Jesuits forced those of Malabar to acknowledge the pope, and expunged from their church books all anti-papal doctrines.† During the seventeenth century Capuchin and Carmelite monks overran Mesopotamia from Diarbekr to Bussorah, and scattered widely the seeds of papacy.‡ The defection of the metropolitan of Diarbekr from the Nestorian faith, and the consequent establishment of the modern papal sect and patriarchate of the Chaldeans during that century, has been already mentioned. Mar Elias, the Nestorian patriarch himself, was also gained over, and in A.D. 1616 sent in his submission to the pope.§ His successors, however, seem to have regulated their obedience by their convenience, and the books of their church have not, so far as we have learned, ever been expurgated by papal censors.

A more serious defection than that of the see of Diarbekr took place in the sixteenth century. Not only had the patriarchate then remained, for nearly a century, hereditary in the same family, but the incumbents would raise none but their relatives to the office of metropolitan. Hence it happened, that when the old patriarch died in A.D. 1551, only one metropolitan was left in the church, and he, being his brother's son, was heir to his office. Unwilling to tolerate any longer such a system of hereditary ecclesiastical aristocracy, an assembly of the clergy and laity met in the city of Mosul, and selected another ecclesiastic, by the name of Sulaka, to succeed to the patriarchate. His consecration, however, exceedingly embarrassed them, for, according to their customs, the ceremony could be performed only by three or four metropolitans, whereas only one officer of that rank existed in the church, and he had declared himself patriarch. It was determined to seek the performance of the rite from the highest authority, and Sulaka was sent to the successor of St. Peter at Rome, where, after giving in a satisfactory confession of his faith, he was proclaimed patriarch in April A.D. 1553. Only his immediate successor received consecration at Rome, where he subscribed the decrees of the council of Trent, and we hear of no correspondence between this see and the pope later than A.D. 1653. The fourth in succession from Sulaka

\* Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 4, p. 141.

† For a valuable account of those iniquitous proceedings, and of Nestorianism in India, see *L'Histoire du Christianisme des Indes*, by M. V. La Croze.

‡ Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 4, p. 169.

§ *Ibid.* vol. 4, p. 169; vol. 1, p. 543.



was Simeon, archbishop of Jeloo, Sert, and Salmás. Since his time the capital of the see has remained in the mountains of Kürdistán, to the west of Oormiah, and its occupants have always borne the name of Simeon, or, with the native title and pronunciation, *Mar Shimón*.\*

It was a part of the flock of this patriarch that we visited in our journey to Oormiah, and which I am now about to introduce to you. I shall give you merely our own inquiries, and leave you to compare them with what La Croze and Asseman have written of the same sect. Instead of pursuing the plan of general classification adopted in presenting our information respecting the Armenians, where our survey was more extensive, it is deemed safer here, considering the shortness of our visit to the Nestorians, to relate separately the conversations of each individual informant. Such a course will necessarily exhibit some repetitions and contradictions; but it will have the advantage of referring every fact to its proper authority, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions, and throwing upon the writer merely the responsibility of faithfully narrating what we saw and heard. The whole is the result of nine days' investigation.

We left Salmás for Oormiah in the morning on the 11th of March. A projection of the mountains of Kürdistán, extending in the form of a small promontory into the lake, separates the two provinces. As we began to ascend it, a small quarry of marble attracted our attention. It was translucent and veined, like that which is so abundant at Marágha, and strongly resembled alabaster. It had evidently been deposited, in successive incrustations, from water. We found three villages and a few fields of grain on the mountains, and in some places snow was lying in our path. On the farther side a narrow plain, opening at the south into the plain of Oormiah, lies between the mountain and the lake. We descended into it, and found a number of little villages at its northern extremity, in several of which there are a few Nestorians. We selected Jamálava, 4 fúrsakhs from Khósrova, for its being the residence of a Nestorian bishop. The bishop was absent, but a priest received us hospitably, and gave us the choice of a room in his house or a stable. We preferred the latter; and it was soon filled with friendly Nestorians, eager to see and converse with us. Our own gratification was great at finding ourselves at

\* Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 1, p. 523, 536; vol. 3, p. 621; vol. 4, p. 164.



last surrounded by the people, to whom we had looked forward with the liveliest interest from the moment of leaving Malta, nor were we less eager than they to converse.

It being Friday, we first questioned the priest respecting the fasts of his church. In conjunction with the others who were present, he informed us that they fast every Wednesday and Friday; twenty-five days before Christmas; fifteen days before the feast of St. Mary; three days before the feast of the cross, which occurs twelve days after Christmas; three days before the feast of St. John; three days before the feast of *Khoodera neby* (St. George); fifty days before Easter, including Easter Sunday, when they eat meat; and fifty days before Pentecost, the observance of which is optional and not regarded by all. We asked, as he finished the list, if there were no more, and he jocosely replied, "Why, are not these enough? what of the year remains for us to eat?" But the bishop afterward mentioned another fast of three days, named after the Prophet Jonah, during which they remain in the church from morning to night, weeping, praying, and fasting. It is not, like the rest, followed by a festival. In none of their fasts do they eat any animal substance whatever, and in lent, with the exception of Sundays and festivals, they eat but twice, once after mid-day and once after evening prayers, and some eat only the latter meal. On the Sundays and festivals of lent, and on the common fasts, whoever chooses, is at liberty to eat in the morning. The priest assured us, that for the fasts of Wednesday and Friday, they cease to eat meat from the time of evening prayers on the days preceding until the same hour on those days themselves; and that for the Sabbath, labour is suspended from evening prayers (or about sunset) on Saturday till daylight (or morning prayers) on Monday. His statement was afterward confirmed by the bishop. In fact, it is well known, that, for all religious purposes, the Nestorians always consider the day to begin at sunset. The bishop added, that they abstain from labour on their festivals generally; but the Sabbath they know to be God's day, and esteem it more sacred than any other.

They informed us, that throughout the year, except in lent, there are services in the church only morning and evening, but that during lent a third service at 11 A.M. is added, unless the Sabbath or a festival occur, when even then there are but two. As we were conversing, the priest was called to evening prayers by the



clattering of a board suspended near the church instead of a bell, and we followed him. The bishop had now returned, and after washing his hands at a rivulet, he led us into the church. The people took off their shoes as they entered, and stood upon a few mats that covered the ground, the only floor of the building. Before taking his place, however, each one kissed a cross that lay upon a book on a reading desk, and then the back of the bishop's hand who stood by its side. This was done even after worship commenced, so that in the midst of a prayer the bishop had repeatedly to put out his hand to be kissed. The bishop, priest, and deacons each had distinct parts in the services, which consisted of prayers, chants, and responses, performed with almost no ceremonies, and having an air of great simplicity. All the officiators wore nothing but their ordinary dress, and no incense was used. The people often joined in the responses, uncovered their heads two or three times at particular parts, repeatedly crossed themselves, and prostrating, kissed the earth like the Armenians, and once all kneeled for some time as if in private prayer. At the close the bishop blessed them, and they again kissed his hand. With the simplicity of their forms we were pleased, but were sorry to observe much evidence that their worship had no spirituality.

The church was a small, dark, vaulted room, entirely destitute of pictures or any kind of ornaments, except coarse shawls which covered the reading desks. These were two blocks of stone on either side of the entrance to the sanctuary, and supported the books from which service was read. Between them and the sanctuary was a narrow space extending from side to side of the building, and enclosed by a wall four or five feet high. The sanctuary itself seemed half as large as the church, and was connected with it by a single door. Opposite the door, on the farther side of it, stood the altar, a plain block stone. The bishop conducted us into the baptistery, a small room on the left of the sanctuary, and connected with the church by a distinct door. After looking a moment at a plain stone trough, which served for a baptismal font, I observed that a door conducted into the sanctuary, and was about to enter. But the bishop commanded me, in an authoritative tone, to stop. I told him that I too was a priest; but he replied, that that place can be entered only by fasting, and betrayed by his manner such earnestness, that I desisted. The church, as well as an outer



court, was entered by a door but just large enough to allow our bodies to pass, being hardly more than two feet high, and narrow in proportion. After creeping out of them, we inquired the reason of their smallness. The bishop replied, "Is it not written, 'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way?'" We had observed a similar peculiarity in the Chaldean churches of Salmás, and had been told that its object was to prevent moslems from introducing their horses. It was observed to be common to the Nestorian churches of Oormiah, and we never heard it satisfactorily explained.

The bishop, with most of his flock, followed us to our stable, and remained, readily answering our questions, and keeping up a friendly conversation, until late. His name was Yohanna. He was a sensible man, about thirty years of age, and son of the priest already mentioned. His uncle was bishop before him; and the office, among the Nestorians, is always hereditary, from uncle to nephew. A bishop himself is never allowed to marry, nor may he, from the day of his birth, eat any other animal food than eggs and the productions of the dairy.

We had anticipated some difficulty, in conversing with the Nestorians, for want of an interpreter. But Providence furnished us with an excellent one at Jamálava, and elsewhere we were able to converse with them through the Turkish, with the addition of now and then a religious technical term from the Armenian, which language they also partially understood. Our interpreter here was a nephew of the deceased bishop Shevris. He was a native of Mardín in Mesopotamia, had lived nine years a monk in the convent of El Koosh, and held the rank of deacon in the Chaldean church. He spoke Arabic fluently, and that was the language in which he conversed with me. With the Nestorians, he spoke in their own dialect, which was also his native tongue. We had first heard this language at Khósrova, and it proved to be the domestic dialect of both the Chaldeans and the Nestorians, though all knew likewise something of Turkish. In roughness of sound, it exceeded even the Armenian. I was able soon to detect in it many Arabic and Hebrew words, but rarely enough to complete the meaning of a sentence. Almost every word seemed to end in a vowel. It is in fact a vulgar Syriac, and the deacon testified, that it differs not at all from the dialect now spoken by the Jacobites of Mesopotamia. Their church books shew the original language of which it is a corruption, and they are in Syriac. The character, indeed, in which



they are written, is peculiar, being but slightly varied from the Estangelo. Many of their oldest books are, in fact, fine specimens of that ancient Syriac alphabet. We procured a copy of the Nestorian alphabet, with the sounds of the letters exemplified. It has not, to our knowledge, ever been printed, and we found none but manuscript books among them. Aside from the character, their church books are in good Syriac. The Chaldean priest at Khós-rova shewed us a beautiful copy of the Pentateuch, which he had had transcribed into the Nestorian character from the Syriac of Walton's Polyglott, and he assured us that the language is exactly the same as that of their books. All testified unanimously, that this language is not now understood without the instructions of a master, and of course that the church services are not comprehended by the common people. That the vulgar dialect differs not much from it, however, will be evident from various facts hereafter to be exhibited. The bishop and priest this evening were evidently men of the slightest education, having little more than a knowledge of letters. And yet, when we produced a copy of the British and Foreign Bible Society's edition of the Syriac New Testament, which we had brought from Tebriz, they set to reading it without difficulty, and declared that they understood it. They might indeed have been previously familiar with the character, for they called it *Yakóby* at first sight, and we found among their own books a copy of the Pentateuch in the same. But we tested their knowledge of the language, by making them translate several passages, and they did it without difficulty. They affirmed that it differed not at all from that of their church books.\*

Our conversation with the bishop naturally turned upon the services which we had just attended; and we expressed our pleasure at observing no images or pictures in the church. "Is it not written by the Psalmist," said he, "Eyes have they but they see not, they have ears but they hear not, neither is there any breath

\* The bishop gave us, on another occasion, the following list of the principal books used in the services of the Nestorian church, but I am not without suspicions that it contains some errors.—*David*, or the Psalter, read at every service. *Ahdám Dooatha*, alternate prayers for every day in the week, containing the names of different saints and martyrs. *Keshkool*, containing prayers for every day in the year. *Khoodera*, containing prayers for the Lord's day, and other festivals in the year, and for every day in lent. *Gezza*, containing prayers for the festivals not in lent. *Takhsa*, or the Missal, containing the communion, ordination, baptismal, and other similar services. *Werde*, containing legends of the saints, and read only in the three days of the fast of Jonah. *Ahdetta*, or the Gospel, read always at the communion on the Lord's days and festivals, and in lent, but at no other time. *Shleeha*, or the Epistles, read like the preceding. None of the Old Testament, except the Psalter, is read in church.



in their mouths?' ” We added the second commandment to this appropriate quotation, and they all seemed gratified at our agreement upon so important a point. He confessed that they pray to the saints, however, and regard them as mediators. We repeated the language of Paul, that there is “one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus;” but he seemed not to feel its force, because, as I thought, neither the deacon, who interpreted, nor himself, understood the word *mediator*. The former, I soon learned, had no distinct idea of the Arabic term *waseet*, which I used; and when a copy of the Epistles was afterward brought from the church, it proved that the bishop was equally unacquainted with the Syriac term for the same thing. When inquiring the contents of their church books on a subsequent evening, we repeatedly asked if prayers are addressed to the saints whose names are contained in them, and were uniformly answered that they are not, but to God that he would enable his worshippers to imitate them. The bishop declared that they call not the Virgin, *mother of God*, but *mother of Christ*. Still they believe in her virginity, he said, both before and after the birth of our Saviour. Respecting Nestorius, he contradicted himself flatly within a few minutes; first denying that they regard him as a saint, or pray to him, and then confessing that they do both. The mention of the founder of their sect, introduced quite a dispute between him and the deacon, on the comparative merits of Nestorius and Cyril, and he produced the Werde to read to us a long legend respecting them.—He constantly affirmed that their name is not derived from Nestorius, but from Nazareth, the town of Mary, and I doubt not that he was correct. For they always call themselves, and are known among their neighbours of other sects, by the name *Nusrány*, which is the very word commonly used in Arabic to designate all Christians, and is generally regarded as equivalent to Nazarene. Indeed they seemed to feel that it is a generic term, and sometimes added *Siriány* to make it distinctive of their sect; which was equivalent to calling themselves *Syrian Christians*. Their countrymen of the monophysite church, they called *Yakóby*. There are none of that sect on this side of the Kürdish mountains.

The bishop allowed that they say prayers and masses for the dead. Still he resolutely denied the existence of more than two places for departed spirits, and seemed inclined to laugh at the fires of the papal purgatory. He clearly declared, also, that there is no



change of place from misery to happiness for the dead. We asked him of what use our prayers can be to them. He replied, "What then, shall we stop praying?" "No," said we, "pray for ourselves and others upon the earth; for such we are commanded to pray; but stop praying for the dead, it can do them no good." He replied, that God would have spared Sodom for the sake of fifty, forty, &c. just persons; and perhaps among those who assemble to pray over the dead, an equal number of just persons may be found, for whose sake God will pardon the dead and receive them to happiness. He seemed to have some idea of the unscriptural distinction between mortal and venial sins; for he said, that there are some which condemn the soul to hell, while others are too small to be followed by such a consequence. Respecting the soul between death and the judgment, he declared, in another connection, that it goes neither to heaven nor to hell, but if wicked, it is in a state of torment, and if righteous, in a state of enjoyment. At the judgment, all will be clothed again with the body, the just will be taken to heaven with Christ, and the wicked will be sent to hell. "Will they remain in hell forever?" we asked. "Yes," said he, "for ever and ever." We could not learn from him, that any other rule than the wishes of relatives decides when, or how often, masses shall be said for the deceased. If they choose, no mass is said at all, and the priest is merely requested to repeat a prayer. Even this, also, is omitted at their option. In speaking of the masses, he said, that after them the relatives go home from the church to eat the feast of the mass, and we asked if they have the custom of making sacrifices. He replied, that Christ had abolished the institution of sacrifices, so that since his death none can be offered; yet they sometimes slay an animal as a good work. The ceremony is not necessarily done at a church, nor on any special days, nor are prayers said over the victim. The deacon who interpreted, was dissatisfied with this statement, and said; "I will explain to you the matter. Whenever a person has a headache, or other complaint, he vows to make an offering to this or that saint, as a good work. An animal is sent to the church of the saint to be sacrificed, and a feast is made of its flesh, or it is distributed to the poor, according to the wish of the offerer." The bishop tacitly assented to the explanation, by asking if we do not likewise offer sacrifices to remove pains and sickness.

We inquired where the souls of the dead were before the coming



of Christ. He replied, that the good were not in paradise itself, but in a state of enjoyment around paradise; and the wicked were not in hell itself, but in a state of misery.—*We*. Did Christ change their condition at his death?—*Bish*. He took them to heaven.—*We*. Both the righteous and the wicked? or the righteous only?—*Bish*. All, except four persons, viz., Jezebel, Herod, Herodias, and her daughter. What is your own belief?—*We*. We believe that the souls of the righteous went to heaven, and those of the wicked to hell, at their death; and that none of the latter were delivered from their torments at the death of Christ.—*Bish*. But it is written, that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The righteous are saved as a matter of course, and if he did not deliver the wicked, of what use was his death?—*We*. Why, in the first place, none are so righteous as to have no sin, for it is written, “There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” In the second place, he did save the wicked, for some, while in this world, repented of their sins, were converted, and obtained forgiveness on his account. The souls of such, and of such only went to heaven at their death.—*Bish*. If so, perhaps only a few hundreds were saved from all the generations that preceded Christ; for very small was the number of those that were good in this world.—*We*. Their number is unknown to us. Elijah thought that he was the only worshipper of the true God among the Israelites of his day; but God told him there were seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

*March 12.* We called upon the bishop in the afternoon, and resumed our conversation. He confirmed what we had previously learned, that his patriarch, Mar Shimón, resides at Kochannes, and claims the title of Patriarch of the East. Kochannes, according to the declaration of a man at Khósrova, who had been there, is not more than an hour from Joolamérk; but the priest at that place said the distance was four fúrsakhs. The latter informed us that the patriarchate, like what has already been said of the episcopate, is hereditary from uncle to nephew. The succession is not regulated by seniority, but by the wishes and arrangement of the family. The diet of the patriarch is more strictly guarded than even that of the bishops, for not only is he forbidden to taste meat from his birth, but his mother also is allowed to eat none, while he derives his nutriment from her.



The Hakáry country, in the centre of which the patriarch resides, and of which Joolamérk is the capital, is the heart of Kürdistán, and consists of almost inaccessible mountains. The Nestorians who inhabit it are called *Ashíret*, a term which the bishop to-day explained as meaning a people who do not pay tribute. They are, in fact, he said, independent, and not only pay no tribute themselves, but exact tribute from the Kürds who live among them. The temporal power is in the hands of distinct meliks, but they all acknowledge the authority of the patriarch. He estimated their number at 50,000 families.—The Chaldean priest at Khósrova said, that the independent districts are deep valleys shut in by the almost impassable mountains of Kürdistán. Each has its own melik or meliks, who acknowledge subjection to no common head. They are elected for life, by the popular voice irregularly expressed, and the office is often, but not always, hereditary in the same family. The patriarch is clothed properly with only spiritual power, and has no army at his command, except as he may have influence enough, on an emergency, to call one or more of the meliks to his aid. The mountains, he said, barely afford them a sustenance, and they are all miserably poor. To complete the diocese of Mar Shimón, we must add other districts in the same mountains subject to the Kürds, and also Salmás and Oormiah under the Persian government. The whole contains, according to an estimated census given us by the same priest at Khósrova, in company with a Chaldean of his village, who had travelled through the independent districts, a Nestorian population of 14,054 families, or about 70,000 souls.\*—The acting English ambassador at Tebriz judged this

\* The following is his estimate in detail:—

	No. of families.
Salmás	4
Oormiah, including Térgaver and Mérgaver, mountainous districts of the province occupied by Kürds	4000
Gárvar, Somai, and Chára, small districts of the mountains adjacent to Salmás, and occupied by Kürds	150
Albágh, a district not far from Salmás, in the direction of Joolamérk, and subject to the Kürds	100
Mahmoodieh, a district between Salmás and the lake of Van, included in the pashalik of Van, but occupied by Kürds	300
Waltoo, a district beyond Joolamérk, and subject to the Kürds	800
Diss, an independent Nestorian district	500
Jéloo, " " " " " " " "	1000
Tkhooby, " " " " " " " "	500
Tiary, " " " " " " " "	6000
Bass, " " " " " " " "	500
Bérwer, " " " " " " " "	200
Total	14,054

In Marágha, Tebriz, Günich, and Khoy, there are now no Nestorians.



estimate to be much too small, and declared that a year or two ago he saw a letter from Mar Shimón, stating, that he had 40,000 families under him in the Hakáry country. But, the fact that one of his predecessors, in writing to the pope, as long ago as 1653, made the same statement of the population of his diocese, leads me to suspect that it is no more than an hereditary estimate.\* Capt. Campbell assured us, also, that the Nestorians are by far the most powerful people of Hakáry, that they are much feared by the Kúrds, and will perhaps, before many years, be left by them in undivided possession of the country. He entertained a high opinion of their character.

The priest at Khósrova informed us, that the Nestorians of Oormiah did not join the party of Mar Shimón at its first secession from the see of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, and continued until lately to acknowledge the patriarchal authority of Mar Elias of El Koosh. The occasion of their finally leaving him, was, his conversion to papacy; which occurred, according to the estimate of the priest, nearly a hundred years ago, but the bishop of Jamálava placed it back only forty years. The deacon, our interpreter, had left his convent only a year and a half ago, and added the fact of his own staunch papacy to his positive declaration, as proof that both Mar Elias and the convent, as well as most of the Nestorians of those parts, are now united to the church of Rome. He said that the convent of El Koosh contains 110 monks. The principal agent of the pope in those parts is a European bishop at Bagdád. Being likewise French consul for that city, he contrives to make his influence extensively felt. From what we heard of him at Khósrova, and from the deacon, we inferred that he is particularly active in procuring the conversion of the Nestorians.—We questioned the bishop of Jamálava, to ascertain if he was aware of the existence of any relics of the Nestorian church in eastern Asia. He was quite confident that there are some in India, but he knew of none in the direction of China. His patriarch, he assured us, sent four bishops many years ago to the East, but nothing had been heard from them.

From the diocese of Mar Shimón, the patriarch, let us turn to that of Mar Yohanna, the bishop of Jamálava. He informed us, that the Nestorians of this village are only twenty-two families in number. Six of them are from Salmás, and the rest have recently

\* Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 3, p. 622.



assembled here from neighbouring villages. He is himself from Gooleeza in Salmás. Respecting the Nestorians of that province, he contradicted the estimate of the priest at Khósrova, and said that instead of four, they amount to twenty-two families. His diocese consists of twelve villages, eight of which are in Oormiah, and the rest in Tégaver, a mountainous district just back of Jamálava to the west. In this village there is no school, nor can any read, except himself, his father and two brothers; but in two others some children are taught by the priests. He confessed that none of the Nestorian females are taught letters. "You," said he, "can attend to such things, but we, both men and women, are obliged to labour with all our might to get money for the moslems. Even if a boy sits down to read, a moslem comes up before he is aware, and with a blow upon his neck, says, "Give us money." Seeing us smile at his remark, he seemed grieved, and exclaimed with more earnestness, "Why do you leave us thus? we are your brethren; it is your duty to come and deliver us from this yoke of bondage." He contended that no people in the world are so fond of learning as the Nestorians, but intimated that none except candidates for the clerical profession, actually receive any education. Of such, there were twelve in his diocese already instructed, and would be admitted to deacon's orders in a few days. Forty-two others were candidates; besides fifteen more, who were studying, and might be ordained hereafter, if they became good. His diocese is now served, he said, by fourteen priests and eleven deacons.

The bishop was curious to know how many orders of the clergy we have, and on learning that we acknowledge only priests and deacons, was unable to imagine how they could be ordained without bishops. But he made no objection to our explanation of the system of presbyterian ordination. Their own clerical orders, he said, are nine, and he seemed to attach much importance to the number. The following is his account of them.—The first, *karrooya*, or reader, lights the candles and performs other menial services in the church.—The second, *hoopo-dyákono*, or sub-deacon, is also a servant of the church for sweeping it and the like.—The third, *shemmásha*, or deacon, aids the priest to celebrate the eucharist, but does not read the gospel on that occasion, as is practised by other sects.—The fourth, *kasha* [*kasheesha*], or priest, says mass, but cannot confer ordination. All his own priests, he affirmed, understand the language of their church books, and



preach every day, as he will ordain no other. But his ideas of preaching seemed not very high, and we could not ascertain that he meant any thing more, than that the lesson of the day, and perhaps some other part of the service, is explained in the vulgar tongue. He declared, too, that none who have not attained the age of twenty-five, can be admitted to priest's orders. But on being contradicted by the company, he allowed that if a youth has a mature mind, and a worthy character, and is acceptable to his village, he may be ordained as early as fifteen.—The fifth, *arki-dyákono*, or archdeacon, holds a relation to the bishop, similar to that of the deacon to the priest. As a priest cannot say mass without a deacon, so a bishop cannot perform an ordination, nor consecrate a church, without an archdeacon. Marriage is allowable to all in the five grades now enumerated, not only before ordination, but as often as their wives die afterward. They thereby, however, became for ever ineligible to the office of bishop.—The sixth, *khálfa* [*episkópa*], or bishop, ordains the five lower grades, and consecrates churches. He must pass through all the grades below him, but may be admitted to the first four successively in one day, and on another day to the fifth and sixth. Our informant was no more consistent in telling us the age requisite for admission to the episcopate, than in reference to the priesthood. For he assured us that the candidate must be thirty-two years old, and afterward confessed that he was himself now only in his thirtieth or thirty-first year, and had been ordained five years. The priest at Khósrova said the Nestorians sometimes ordain bishops only six years of age, and the deacon, our interpreter to-day, affirmed that he had seen them as young as thirteen. Their common episcopal address, *aboona* (our father), must seem not a little misplaced when given to such young ecclesiastics; and it was hardly less amusing to hear the priest at Jamálava, constantly apply the same title to the bishop, his son.—The seventh, *matrán* [*metropoleeta*], is higher than the bishops, and receives from them a visit of homage three times a year.—The eighth and ninth, *katoleeka* and *patriarka*, or catholicos and patriarch, ordain bishops and matrás. He affirmed that they are offices held by two different individuals, but found so much difficulty in making it out, on being cross-questioned, that we imagined them to be merely different titles of the same person. Oil is used only in ordaining the patriarch.—He informed us, that in the district of Jéloo there are some





Nestorian convents. The monks, though forbidden to marry while they profess monasticism, are allowed, he said, to leave their convents, if they dislike them, and take to themselves wives.

The contributions received by the patriarch from his flock, if we may believe the bishop, are not fixed by any rule, but their voluntary liberality. He never comes to this province in person to collect them, being afraid to leave his mountain fastnesses, but sends his brother once in two or three years. He was here, and also at Khósrova, but a few days before our visit.—The income of the bishop is derived chiefly from a tax of two *sháhies* (about 3 cts.) upon every individual in his diocese, and a fee of one *real* (about 35 cts.) for every wedding. He receives also, sometimes, a voluntary contribution for masses for the dead. For ordination, Mar Yohanna positively denied at first that any thing is paid, but, being pressed by the deacon, he at last said that, as it is commanded, “Freely ye have received freely give,” no particular sum is exacted by law, but different amounts are given by different candidates.—The income of the priest is exceedingly small, and most of their support is derived from labouring like other men. In time of harvest, each parishioner gives them a day’s labour at reaping, or, if they have no crop of their own, a winnowing fan full of grain. For every marriage they receive a *real*, and for baptisms, burials, and masses and prayers for the dead, a voluntary fee. But for communicants to contribute any thing to the officiating priest at communion is a thing, he said, not allowed, and entirely unknown.

Wishing to know if the Nestorians have any idea of the doctrines of evangelical religion, we inquired of the bishop the object of Christ’s death. He began his reply by saying that God created man and placed him in Paradise. The angels were then ordered to worship him. But a part, unwilling to worship an inferior who was created after themselves, disobeyed and became devils. We were pained to hear this fable of the Korán from the mouth of a Christian bishop, and reminded him that the salvation of men, and not the fall of the angels, was the object of our question. He repeated that God created man and he fell. The Father then said he has sinned and must be punished. But the Son said I will save him, and so he died to save us from punishment, from satan, and from sin. We inquired if he saved us from original sin only, or likewise from sins of our own commission.—*Bish.* He indeed

saved us; but if we continue to sin, his death, though we may be baptized and be called Christians, will do us no good.—*We.* But all men do continue to sin. How are they to obtain pardon?—*Bish.* By fasting, by sincere hearty repentance, and by confession to God, promising at the same time to sin no more.—*We.* If we are to obtain pardon for our sins thus, then Christ saved us from original sin only.—*Bish.* We are saved by Christ; but how? We must obey his commands, must fast, commune, repent sincerely, confess to God, and the like.—We varied our question in different ways, to learn if he entertained the common idea, that original sin is cancelled by the death of Christ, and actual sin by our own good works. But, though he expressly acknowledged the doctrine of original sin, we could not find that he had made this distinction, or had any clear idea that all or even any sin is pardoned solely through the death of Christ. He laid much stress upon sincerity of repentance and consistent Christian conduct.

We changed the subject by saying you have told us what the Father and the Son have done for man, will you tell us now the work of the Spirit?—*Bish.* He descended upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; he descended too upon Christ at his baptism; and in like manner he descends now upon all men when they are baptized.—*We.* Does he do nothing for us after baptism?—*Bish.* Most certainly, he is always with us and does every thing for us.—We asked him if no instance ever occurred among them of wicked men's becoming correct in their conduct and good Christians through his influences, in order to ascertain whether he had any idea of regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit, distinct from baptism. But he knew too little of the subject even to understand us!—In regard to the nature of Christ, the bishop expressed his full belief that he is perfect God and perfect man, and added, too (in agreement with Nestorius, but contrary to the doctrine usually ascribed to him), that his two natures are united in *one person*, using for person the word *knooma*. The Spirit, he thought, proceeded from the Father only.

At last, the bishop came upon that *Shibboleth* of party in the oriental churches, the sign of the cross, and asked us to show how we make it. We replied that we do not make it at all. Not that we have any law against it, but if a man is at heart a Christian, we do not consider such a sign necessary, especially as it is not





ordered in the New Testament. "But," said he, "are we not ordered to take up our cross and follow Christ?" "Yes," we replied, "but if this sign be the cross of which our Saviour spoke, we ought to make it on the back instead of the breast!" Another thought that our neglect of this ceremony shewed an unwillingness to make an open profession of Christianity, and quoted the words, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." We declared that our ideas most fully accord with this important passage, and that in no case should the fear of man lead us to deny our religion. We must profess it in the face of danger and of death. In this fact would be what our Saviour means by taking up our cross. It is to imitate him in enduring contumely and suffering for his sake. "But," said the bishop, "without the sign of the cross, how can you show that you are Christians?" "By obeying him," we replied, "and manifesting in all our conduct that we love him." Still it appeared to him very strange that we should call ourselves Christians, and not make the cross.—The Nestorians perform this ceremony in the same manner as the Greeks.

The Chaldean priest at Khósrova, in agreement with Asseman, whom he seemed to have diligently studied, assured us that the ancient books of the Nestorians treat of *seven sacraments*, and those the same that are acknowledged by the papal church. He declared that now, however, they have really none at all; for, in the celebration of the mass, the words of consecration are wanting. Baptism is performed very negligently and in no uniform manner. They pretend to have marriage, but if the wife be guilty of adultery, the husband is allowed to take another. Ordination too is made to consist with permission for the clergy to marry, as often as they become widowers, to the number of seven and half wives, a widow being considered the half wife. Confession has long since been abolished. And of confirmation and extreme unction, he said they have at present no knowledge.—We inquired of the bishop at Jamálava the number of the Nestorian sacraments, on the first evening of our visit. He immediately replied *seven*; and when requested to enumerate them, repeated *baptism, the eucharist, ordination, and marriage*, without hesitation. Then he stopped to think and inquire, and finally added, *burial, the sacred leaven, and confession*. Upon being interrogated, however, he most fully denied the existence of *auricular confession*, and af-



firmed that they confess their sins only to God, and demand absolution from him alone. The practice of anointing the sick as a preparation for death, too, or *extreme unction*, he confessed had no existence among them, and pretended that the burial service alone is a sacrament. *Confirmation* he never alluded to, except to imply that it does not exist, as will be soon mentioned.—After our afternoon's visit to the bishop mentioned above, he followed us to our room, and, with many of his flock, spent the evening in conversation. We now solicited from him a written list of their sacraments, and obtained the following, viz. *baptism* (maamoo-deeta); *the eucharist* (korbána); *ordination* (siám eedat káhna [kahenoota]); *consecration of churches* (siam eedat oomara); *marriage* (boorákha); *the consecrated leaven* (kodáshat khmeera [khmeera kodeesha]); and *consecrated oil* (kodáshat korna [korna or mashha kodeesha]).

*Baptism*, he said, is performed only in churches, and the whole body of the child is plunged three times in the water, because John plunged our Saviour three times in Jordan. When we mentioned, however, that we had heard that they only plunge the body up to the chin, and then pour water three times upon the head, his father confessed that they do so, though they plunge the whole, also, when there is water enough! When asked the effect of baptism, both replied that it is the regeneration spoken of by our Saviour, when he said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." We suggested that he explained himself by saying in a subsequent verse, "Except a man be born of water and of the *Spirit*." "Yes," they replied, "as the Spirit descended upon Christ at Jordan, so he now, in every instance, descends upon all persons at their baptism." The bishop would not allow that the souls of infants that die before baptism are doomed to hell, nor did he admit that they are received to heaven, but said that a place is prepared specially for them.—To ascertain if the ceremony of *confirmation* is not, as among the Armenians, added to that of baptism, we asked if they have not the *meirón*. He confessed that a single drop of oil is put upon the forehead of a child, but contended that it is only consecrated by the officiating priest for the occasion, and not by the patriarch, and that it is not a distinct sacrament, but an integral part of baptism. He seemed amused at our question, whether circumcision is practised by them, as if the union of a moslem (as he called it) to



a Christian rite was not only unheard of but implied an absurdity. We informed him that the Abyssinians both circumcise and baptize. He expressed a fear that it would be with them as with a man near Mosul, who, to obtain a certain woman, turned moslem. On the night of their marriage he died, and his wife sat bewailing him, and said, "Alas, man! you have rejected the Messiah, and Mohammed has not received you, where can your soul go!"

The sacrament of the *sacred leaven* he thus explained. At the institution of the eucharist, our Saviour gave two pieces of the bread to John, the beloved disciple. He saved one, and dipped it in the blood and water that flowed from his Lord's side, when pierced with the spear upon the cross. This was the original leaven. It is now renewed once a year, on Holy Thursday. Flour, wine, and oil are mixed and consecrated; and then always kept in a vessel in the church to be mixed, like leaven, with the bread of the sacrament of the supper.

The bread of the *eucharist*, he said, is made in the form of small, round, thick cakes, with a cross, and nothing else, stamped upon them. It is kneaded and baked in the church at the time of the celebration of the sacrament, a small oven being provided for the purpose; and he seemed somewhat stumbled at our taking common baker's bread for so holy a purpose. In fact, it was evident from his whole account, that uncommon sacredness is ascribed to this ordinance. Although in the usual services of the church the priests make no change in their ordinary dress, he said that on this occasion they are clothed in a white robe with a red fillet around the neck. That we could consecrate the elements with our shoes on quite astonished him. They not only remove their shoes, but no one that has not some grade in the church can enter the part of the church called the sanctuary at all, nor can even those that have, do it without previously fasting. The consecrated elements are never carried from the church as a viaticum, but persons nigh unto death, if the priest deems them pure and worthy, are sometimes brought to receive them there. We did not learn whether this is always done, or is deemed essential. He was amazed that we, on similar occasions, sometimes celebrate the ordinance by the bedside of the sick; and exclaimed, "How is it possible that the body of our Lord should be consecrated in an unconsecrated place!" In short, he declared most positively, that the elements, after consecration, are no longer bread and wine, but truly



the body and blood of the Lord, and affirmed that they worship them very much.

The communicants partake first of the bread, and then of the wine; and this, we were surprised and gratified to find, is done by all, every time the ordinance is celebrated. "We do not," said the bishop, "like the other sects, consecrate the elements, and give them to none, or to only two or three, but to all who are pure and worthy to receive them; to those who are not pure, and to children who have not yet learned their prayers, only bread is given." This seemed at once to shew that the Nestorians have not the abominable *mass* of the Latin and other old churches, and that their eucharist is only the celebration of the supper for purposes of communion; and we asked, with eagerness, how often it occurs,—to know if even in frequency of repetition it has any resemblance to the pretended daily sacrifice of the *mass*. He said they attend to it only on the more important days, and are not very regular; on another occasion he numbered twelve days, when it was most necessary; and finally stated, that some years it might be celebrated no more than three or four times, and others as many as thirty. Another declaration of the bishop revealed a second equally important peculiarity of the Nestorian church. "We admit," said he, "all the *twelve* Christian sects to our communion, if they will come, but none of them admit us to theirs." In answer to an inquiry from us, he affirmed, that the Nestorians, in return, have full liberty to go to the communion of any other denomination. We explained that we also hold to similar principles of open communion. But, seeming to have an idea that the twelve apostles divided the earth between them, and established twelve orthodox sects, with different usages and rites, all of which differ from his own in this respect; he was perplexed to know where to class us, and asked who was our apostle. We replied, that as America was not known to exist till three or four hundred years ago, none of them could have gone thither. Their own apostles, he said, were St. Thomas from among the twelve, and St. Adai (Thaddeus) and St. Mari from the seventy-two. To test the truth of our professions, he asked if we would administer the communion to him, were he to visit America. Our reply, that we admit all good men, was unsatisfactory; and he said, "Whether I am good or not, if I come in an unknown stranger, would you give me the communion?" We answered in the negative; and asked their own prac-





tice in this respect. He declared that the priest explains to the people what character will render them worthy communicants, and that if they have committed such and such sins, they are unworthy. Those who have the character described, he invites to draw nigh; those who are guilty of the sins, he forbids, saying, it is a fire that will consume them. But if a wicked man, not knowing his guilt, or from presumption, should present himself, the elements would not be denied him. Should an apostate to Mohammedanism wish to return, however, he confessed that he would not be admitted to the communion till he had fasted fifty days; repented and bewailed his sin from the heart; and had prayers read over his head by the priest in the church.—He assured us that they do not imitate the washing of the disciples feet on Holy Thursday.

*Marriage* is celebrated, he informed us, sometimes in the church, and sometimes in private houses. In the latter case, the communion is not connected with it, but only unconsecrated bread and wine are given to the married couple. Respecting divorce, his assertions were contradictory. He first affirmed that none is acknowledged which allows the separated parties to marry again. But a few questions drew from him the admission, that in case of adultery, if the fault be the woman's, the man may take another wife, and if it be the man's, the woman may take another husband.

The *consecrated oil* is used, he said, but for two purposes; the ordination of patriarchs, and the coronation of kings, as Samuel anointed Saul and David. It is consecrated for the occasion by the bishops who ordain the patriarch.—*Churches are consecrated* when a new one is built, or an old one has been desecrated by a moslem's entering the sanctuary. It is done by a bishop. He uses oil, which is consecrated by him for the occasion.

*March 13.* We spent the Sabbath at Jamálava. It was the beginning of the Nestorian Lent. The Armenians, however, were not to begin theirs until to-morrow, and observed to-day as carnival. Fifteen or twenty families of that nation reside here, and have one church; their only clergyman is a deacon, and they are obliged to bring a priest from Ada to say mass. In the afternoon, a crowd of them assembled in the yard of one of their houses, for amusement. The younger and more playful danced to the sound of music, and the older and more respectably dressed sat upon the ground in a corner, quaffing large draughts of wine; all seemed to have equally forgotten the sacredness of the day. A curious orna-

ment, but one as ancient as the days of Rebecca\*, was observed upon the younger females. It was a large ring inserted in the cartilage of the nose. We had already noticed a girl thus decked at Khósrova; and here was another among the dancers, with the nose-ring connected to that of the ear by a heavy chain of ornaments. It reminded me of a similar appendage to the nose, used by some of the women of Cairo in Egypt.—We met no other Armenians in the province of Oormiah. There are others, but they are so few, in consequence of the large emigration to the Russian territories, that we deemed it unimportant to search for them.

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## LETTER XXI.

### OORMIAH.

Plain of Oormiah—Reception at Ada—Mar Yoosuf—Nestorian fasts—Evening prayers—Number of the Nestorian sacraments—Baptism—Forgiveness of sins—Eucharist—Nestorian clergy—Education—Regard for papacy—Education of the clergy—Political discontent—Town of Oormiah—Disregard to truth—Reception at Ardishai—Dress of the Nestorian clergy—Mar Gabriel and his diocese—Evening prayers—Eucharist—Baptism—The bishop's house and family—Fasting—Argument with a Chaldean—Reasons for not proceeding farther—Koosy—Evening prayers—Nestorian manuscripts—Interview with Mar Oorahám—The Takhsa—The Sünhedüs—Celebration of the eucharist—Suggestions respecting a mission in Persia.

DEAR SIR,

OUR delay of two days at Jamálava more than realized the pleasure we had anticipated from visiting the Nestorians. The friendliness, simplicity, and unreserved frankness of the bishop and his flock, and the amount of information he patiently allowed us to draw from him by an almost uninterrupted series of questions, gave a deep interest to our intercourse. We bade them farewell at an early hour on the 14th of March, to visit another Nestorian bishop at Ada, about five fúrsakhs distant. After leaving the few villages in the vicinity of Jamálava, the narrow plain between the mountains and the lake ceased to be cultivated. At the distance

\* See Gen. xxiv. 47.



of four or five miles, the plain of Oormiah opened, projecting for some distance into the lake on the left, and extending up between the mountains on the right. It seemed of great extent, and almost perfectly level. A road led directly to the town of Oormiah, on its south-west side near the foot of the mountains, at a distance of at least ten miles from the lake. We turned to the left, and were soon surrounded by marks of a dense population and of extreme fertility. Villages were separated but a little from each other, and the fruit trees and poplars around them resembled a continuous forest. Almost every spot was cultivated with grain or cotton, and the canals which irrigated them (some of them so large as to be used for mill-streams) were so frequent and full, as seriously to impede our progress. Nothing could exceed the apparent fertility of the dark loam which formed the soil. In a word, the native province of Zoroaster (for tradition pretends that Zoroaster was born in Oormiah), seemed altogether the finest, the most densely populated and highly cultivated tract we had seen in Asia.—As we passed along, an old Kürdish shepherd by the side of the path, cried out, “Aha! you are just the men I have been wanting to see for a long time. Our governor here oppresses, beats, and kills us. This is Kürdistán; the Kürds are many, and the *Kuzul-báshes* (Persians) are few. When are you coming to take the country and allow us a chance to beat and kill them?” He supposed we were Russians; and the inhabitants of a Kürdish village not far beyond, seemed equally glad to see us, and asked when we came from Eriván.

At Ada, we announced ourselves as clergymen, and inquired for the bishop. He was an elderly man, by the name of Yoosuf. We were received cordially, and provided with comfortable accommodations. Hardly had we dismounted, before nearly the whole village crowded around us. They followed us to our room, and filled it almost to suffocation. Pleased as we were to see such an interest excited by our arrival, we feared it would seem to their rulers like a tumultuous rising, and would gladly have persuaded many of them to retire. But our remonstrances were in vain, and the bishop, when urged to exert his authority, assured us, that the whole was but the overflowing of pure love to us, and we must bear with them. They listened to our conversation until late at night, and were finally persuaded to retire, only by our declaring that we were going to bed.



As we took our seat with the bishop, a pipe was offered him, but he declined it, saying, that it being lent he fasted all day, without eating, drinking, or smoking, until after evening prayers. He confessed, however, that in this he followed merely his own choice, or at the most a rule binding upon bishops alone, as the common people fast thus only until after the prayers at mid-day. Respecting the prohibition of every animal production during their fasts, and their commencement and termination at sunset instead of midnight, he confirmed what had been said at Jamálava. Our own disregard of all fasting rules excited his surprise, as it did that of all the Nestorians whom we met. We plainly declared, that we acknowledge no distinction between different kinds of food, but hold fasting to be important because the Scriptures approve of it: still, as they have fixed no particular days, we leave individual Christians to their own choice. The explanation seemed not sufficiently satisfactory to remove the impression, that we wantonly trample upon a most sacred custom. His reason for the church's fasting fifty instead of forty days, was curious. He allowed that our Saviour first fasted forty days in the wilderness, and that the apostles, in imitation of him, observed the same length of time: but said they fasted all the time, without eating night or day; this we are unable to do, and they have consequently granted us liberty in the Apostolical Canons to eat at night, but in consideration of the indulgence, have increased the number of days to fifty.

We attended evening prayers with the bishop. No other ceremonies were observed than at Jamálava, except that the deacon, when reading the Psalter, wore, in addition to his ordinary clothes, a white sash around his loins, and a similar band passing over his left shoulder, and tucked under the sash before and behind. Burning incense, too, was carried around to each individual of the congregation, for him to hold his hands and face in its smoke. The poverty of the church was similar, and the apparent want of devotion even greater. There were no pictures nor images, and the bishop testified that they are not allowed. But he confessed that relics of saints are highly venerated by his countrymen, and, in fact, that they can build no church without putting a relic under the altar.

Mar Yoosuf of Ada was as ready as Mar Yohanna of Jamálava, to declare the number of the Nestorian sacraments to be seven. He enumerated baptism, the eucharist, ordination, marriage, con-



fession, consecration of churches, and burial. But when interrogated, he explained that auricular confession is found only in their ancient books, and is now never practised. By the sacrament of burial, too, he intended merely the services connected with putting the body in the ground. And he admitted that the sacred leaven, and the consecrated oil are likewise sacraments; remarking, as we reminded him of them, that we must have read their books.

Baptism, he said, cannot be administered by a deacon, nor indeed by a priest without a deacon, as both have a part to perform. When asked the effect of baptism, he replied, in connection with a priest, who seemed a clever man, and sat by his side to help him in his answers, "Christ said to Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus, being advanced in years, asked, 'How can a man be born when he is old?' Our Saviour explained by saying, 'Except a man be born of water,' &c. It was baptism of which he spoke." "But was that all?" said we, "he added something more." "True," rejoined the bishop, "as the Spirit descended upon Christ at his baptism, so he now descends upon all who are baptized." He seemed, in this and in some other of his explanations, to quote from a book, and the similarity of his remarks to those of the bishop at Jamálava, made us suspect that some book is in common use among them, which explains their dogmas. When questioned farther, he declared that baptism takes away original sin; and we then asked him, how we are to obtain the pardon of actual sin. He at first said that we must go and confess our sins to the priest, and then fast and weep; but immediately admitted that no such confession is now practised. Still he contended that when a person, who has apostatized to Mohammedanism, or committed any other great crime, wishes to return, he first goes and tells the priest, then fasts a certain number of days in the church (the apostate forty days), praying and weeping, making a certain number of genuflections every day, and putting ashes under him and on his head; and at the end, the priest, on the morning of the communion, reads over him at the altar an absolution, the tenor of which is, that if he has sincerely repented he is forgiven in heaven as well as on earth, but if he has not repented he is forgiven neither in heaven nor on earth. He is then admitted to the communion. If he fall away into the same crime again, however, a second absolu-



tion is never given, nor is he ever after allowed to partake of the eucharist.

He represented that the eucharist is celebrated oftener than Mar Yohanna had given us to understand ; and even said it ought to be done every day. In practice, however, it occurs, he allowed, only on Sundays, the festivals, and frequently in lent ; perhaps from fifty to a hundred times a year. He added his testimony, that on every occasion all who are pure and worthy are accustomed to commune. The priest reads to the audience assembled, a warning against certain sins, they say, " We repent," and he then administers to them the elements. Should a person present himself, who is known not to be prepared, one, for instance, who has quarrelled with his neighbour, and not become reconciled, he is refused. When asked if members of other denominations are allowed to come to their communion, he replied, " Most certainly, all the twelve Christian sects are our brethren, why should they not come ?" And he allowed, that though he should object to a Nestorian's going to another sect when there was a church of his own open in the same place, he should be perfectly willing when there was none, that he should commune with the English, the Armenians, or any other of the twelve. We asked, if the Nestorians believe that the bread and wine of the sacrament become the real body and blood of Christ. " Most certainly," he replied, " that is our hope ; by what else do we expect to be saved from our sins ?" And we understood him to acknowledge it to be a propitiatory sacrifice. He also said they worship it ; but the words he used might mean no more than reverence.

His account of the income of the clergy agreed nearly with that of Mar Yohanna. The bishop receives from every individual in his diocese, a tax of two sháhies (about 3 cts.) per annum ; a fee of one réal (about 35 cts.) for every marriage ; and for ordination, from five to twenty réals, according to the circumstances of the candidate. A priest receives four batmáns (about 40lbs.) annually from every granary ; for marriages a fee of one réal ; and four sháhies for baptisms ; with sometimes a few voluntary contributions for other ceremonies. But this income is not sufficient to support the priests, and they are obliged to labour like other men. The two bishops agreed, also, in the number and names of the ecclesiastical orders ; except that Mar Yoosuf allowed that the two



grades of katoleeka and patriárka are united in the person of Mar Shimón. He added that none below the bishop can perform ordination, and that bishops themselves can be ordained only by the patriarch. The patriarch is ordained by two matrâns. With the exception of the patriarch, at whose consecration alone oil is used, the ordination ceremony of the other grades consists merely in prayers said over the candidate, the imposition of hands, and cutting so much of the hair on the crown as when grasped in the hand rises above it. The last particular contradicted what had been told us by the Chaldean deacon at Jamálava, that the Nestorians make the tonsure in the form of a cross. The bishop wished to know how our own clergy are ordained, and seemed satisfied with our statement, that the ceremony consists merely in the imposition of hands and prayer, without oil or the tonsure. But on learning that we have no higher order than priests, he wondered how they could get ordination. "As in your own church," said we, "two matrâns ordain a patriarch who is greater than they, so in ours, two or more priests ordain a priest, their equal." "It is right," he replied, "but who preached the gospel to you?" He went on to say, that our Saviour sent his *twelve* apostles into different parts of the earth, and from them sprang *twelve sects*. He could not enumerate them, but declared that their names are found in the Nestorian books. His idea was, that although the gospel is *one*, each apostle gave to his own sect particular institutions, which are binding upon it, and not upon the others. Upon no other sect, he thought, had so onerous rites been imposed as upon the Nestorians. All the twelve are orthodox, but any new thirteenth or fourteenth sect he would immediately pronounce to be heretical.

The bishop informed us, that there are only 30 houses of Nestorians in Ada, but I am inclined to prefer Mar Yohanna's statement, that there are 80, especially as it is in his diocese. They have two churches, with a priest and one or two deacons. Its Armenian inhabitants were formerly numerous, but nearly all have gone to the Russian provinces. It has no school. A year or two ago, the bishop said, he procured an instructor who taught three or four, and they are the only readers in the village. He declared that the Nestorians are extremely fond of learning, but moslem oppression allows them no time for it, and puts it out of the power of parents to educate their children. The priest had a son, and he



had a nephew, he said, whom they wished much to educate, but it was impossible. We inquired for schools in his diocese, but he declared that he had no diocese, not even this village belonged to him. Two or three others, he said, were claiming all they could; he thought such a course unchristian, and claimed nothing.

The subject of education led him to remark, that bishop Shevris spent much for the instruction of the Nestorians, and that of the few who have any knowledge of letters, a large portion are indebted to him for it. We inquired whether such efforts were acceptable to them. "Yes," said he, "but he told us to turn to the church of Rome, and we would not turn. I was at Kochannes once, when he offered Mar Shimón four thousand tománs, if he would become a papist!"—We had already inquired of Mar Yohanna at Jamálava, in what estimation the pope is held by the Nestorians, and received for answer, that they reverence the see of Rome, but do not acknowledge him who occupies it. He distinctly declared, too, that Peter not merely stood at the head of the apostles, in wisdom and energy, but was clothed with authority over all the rest, by the declaration of our Saviour to him—"Whosoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," &c. We reminded him that this is said likewise expressly to all the apostles; but he replied, that to Peter alone was it said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church." The argument was closed by our declaring, that this does not at all imply that the church is not equally built upon the other apostles; in Rev. xxi. 14, the New Jerusalem is said to have *twelve* foundations, and in them the names of the *twelve apostles* of the Lamb; and in Eph. ii. 20, believers are said to be built upon the foundation of the *apostles and prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.—We now expressed our hope to Mar Yoosuf, that his nation will never yield to propositions like those of Bishop Shevris, and inquired what they thought of the pope. "We receive him," was the reply. "What," said we, "are you a *katoleek*?" (the name by which the members of the papal church are generally known among them.) "Is the pope a katoleek?" he asked. We assured him that he is more of a katoleek than any person he ever saw. "Then," said he, with deep feeling, "I don't receive him, for he has departed from the gospel path, has he not?" He still declared that he considered Peter the head of the apostles, and contended with some warmth, that Christ ordered



them all to obey him.—These remarks of the bishop singularly confirmed what the Chaldean priest had told us at Khósrova, that while the Nestorians are strongly prejudiced against the Roman Catholics, they have great reverence for the pope, and believe that his religion is like theirs, supposing his tenets to have been misrepresented to them by his professed followers.

The bishop's quotations from Scripture, especially in proof of his last position, were very incorrect, and betrayed but a slight knowledge of the Word of God. With the modern Syriac alphabet he seemed to be not at all acquainted; but he could still read our copy of the Syriac New Testament, with a little difficulty in regard to now and then a word. The language of their church books, he declared, is not understood by the common people; but the priests are accustomed to explain particular parts of the services, especially the lessons from the Gospel. This he called preaching. He affirmed that in the mountains, there are some schools designed specially for the education of the clergy; but we obtained from him no information respecting them. He confirmed the statement already given, that this province formerly acknowledged the supremacy of Mar Elias of El Koosh, but left him when he became a papist (as he now is), and submitted to Mar Shimón. The confession of Mar Yohanna, that Christ is perfect God and perfect man existing in one person, was also acceded to by him; with the additional explanation, that the two persons, human, and divine, are so united as to have become one. He declared, too, with that bishop, that his nation derive their name *Nusrány*, from Nazareth, where Christ was brought up; but added the singular assertion, *that they are descended from the ten tribes of Israel.*

Before leaving Jamálava, we had been asked by Mar Yohanna, when we thought the authority would pass from the hands of moslem into those of Christian kings. Understanding him to refer to the millenium, we told him that God has indeed promised a time when all men shall not only be under Christian governments, but shall themselves be Christians, and we hoped it would not be long delayed, but how long, we felt unable to determine from the Word of God. We ascertained from him, that he had no expectation of Christ's appearing on earth again, till he comes to judge the world, and, in fact, had no distinct ideas of the millenium at all. But he said he was not speaking of the latter days, when Elias would come, and the gospel be preached to all people, but to a time not



far distant, when the government of the nations would pass into the hands of Christian kings. His meaning was not fully understood till we reached Ada. The salutation of the old Kürd, on the road, was an indication of political discontent. On our arrival here, the first Nestorian who entered our room, said distinctly that he wished to go to Tiflis with us. After the company had dispersed at night, another stopped to say, that all the young men in the place had taken an oath in the church, and subscribed their names to a promise, that they would leave for Georgia within three days. They could bear their oppressions no longer. Our situation, in this high excitement, you can readily conceive was delicate. The crowd that collected around us might be taken by the rulers for a rising of the people *en masse* to receive us as their deliverers. Two moslem servants of the khan who owns the village, actually came to inquire who we were, but were satisfied by a sight of our *rákams*. The Nestorians we took every means to make understand our real character, that no false hopes might be raised. And in order not to implicate ourselves, not only were all questions that could possibly have a political bearing, carefully avoided by us, but Antonio was charged to be equally cautious. To harden our hearts thus, however, was difficult in the extreme, and "while we held our peace our sorrow was stirred." For a poor man was drawn up and bastinadoed near our door, just after we arrived. The only occasion of his punishment, was, if we may believe his townsmen, that the khan who owns the village, had demanded of him ten *tománs*, or his daughter. The poor man had but two goats in the world, and could not give the money. He loved his daughter, and would not give her. But they expected the cruelty would be repeated, until his resolution to withhold her would be overcome.

*March 15.* Ada is two and a half or three *fürsakh*s nearly eastward from the town of Oormiah (often pronounced Oroomiah). Our intention to visit that place was frustrated by the existence of the plague. It was indeed in many of the villages, also, and one very near Ada was infected. But the danger from travelling among them was small, as we were able, by careful inquiry, to shun all that had the disease. In the town, according to some accounts, it was just at that time attended with much mortality; and to mingle with a dense city population under such circumstances, would have been attended with great exposure. We determined therefore to avoid it, especially as there was very little inducement



to draw us thither. Its Nestorian inhabitants, we were informed at our next station, hardly amount to more than a hundred houses. Of papists, of any kind, there are none.

Having learned that another Nestorian bishop resides at Ardishai, five fursakhs from Ada and two fursakhs below Oormiah on the road to the southern end of the lake, we started for that place at an early hour this morning. The country was fertile, and villages were almost as frequent as yesterday. Our guide from Ada afforded an instance of the little confidence that can be reposed in statistical information obtained from this people, and reminds me to say, that the statements of that kind, which the Nestorians gave us, were so very uncertain and contradictory, that we despaired of making any approximation to the truth. He declared, that besides 50 Nestorian families in Ada there were 70 of papists, and that he was himself one of the latter. But Nestorians and Chaldeans afterward assured us that he was not a papist himself, and that there were none at Ada, but that he had probably told us the story under the impression that we were of that sect and should be gratified by it. We imagined that some of the statements of the bishops, and indeed many of those of Mar Yoosuf, were similarly coloured for the same reason. We took pains to proclaim that we had no connection with the pope, still they could not be persuaded at once that our doctrines were not like those of the papists, and that our esteem for them would not be increased in proportion as we found theirs of a similar character.

We were hardly in sight of Ardishai before the people were seen upon their terraces, and running from all directions to meet us, and by the time we reached the bishop's door, a crowd of hundreds of men, women, and children beset us, all apparently overjoyed at our arrival. We were actually alarmed for the consequence of such excitement, and begged the bishop to give us a room immediately that we might escape the multitude. He invited us into his own house. But they crowded upon us there, and though often dispersed by his command, given at our request, they as often returned, until we finally stationed a servant at the door to prevent more than a small number from entering. No other reason was assigned for their assembling than affection for us, and a wish to see us. Curiosity to see Europeans, of whom few had ever been among them, was probably one cause of the excitement; nor do I doubt that real friendliness of heart had some influence; but a



hope that we would free them from their oppressions was upper most in their minds. We took such a course at Ardishai as to hear few of their complaints.

None of the Nestorian clergy were distinguished from the laity by their dress, except the bishops. They wore a Kürdish costume, which consisted of a large red cap, hanging down behind and wound round with a turban, instead of the conical sheepskin cap of the Persians, and of flowing robes somewhat in the Osmanly fashion. The dress of the bishop of Ardishai, however, was distinguished in nothing from the Persian mode, except that upon his head he had only a tight red skull-cap. His name was Gabriel. He was a beardless youth, aged, according to his own and his mother's declaration, only twenty, and yet he had been ordained to the episcopate seven years! Though young, his manner was sober enough, perhaps, but he seemed extremely heedless. An oath frequently slipped from his mouth in conversation. So difficult did we find it to draw his attention more than a minute to any topics we brought forward, and his answers were given with so little thought, and in some cases with so little regard to truth, that we despaired, at first, of obtaining from him any accurate information. He is the seventh of his family, who have occupied this see in succession. —The village of Ardishai, he said, consists of 100 families of Nestorians, who have four or five churches, and as many deacons, but no priests, all of them having died of the epidemic the last year. He affirmed positively that it contains no papists, but when a Chaldean priest afterward came in, he confessed that there are two priests and four or five families of that sect. The village of Barbary, their principal residence, and where they have another priest is not far to the south, and a few live also in another village in the province. The bishop's diocese, if we may believe his own statements, embraces 20 or 30 villages. Ten schools are taught in them by priests, each of which has from five to ten boys, and one as many as twenty. He alluded to the existence of schools in the mountains for the education of the clergy, but added no information respecting them. Convents, he assured us, exists in those parts for females as well as males, and both monks and nuns have completely retired from the world, are under a vow of celibacy, and can never marry. He estimated the Nestorians of the province of Oormiah at four or five thousand families.

We attended evening prayers with the bishop, but observed



little to add to what I have already said of their forms of worship. Each one on entering not only went to kiss the hand of the bishop, as in the other places, but came to us also, and passed around the congregation, for the same purpose, seeming to intend it for a mere fraternal salutation. The church being sufficiently lighted by the sun, the use of candles, which was observed in all the other churches we visited, was dispensed with. Nor was any incense used; but the reason assigned for neglecting it, was, that it had been stolen from the church the night before. The deacon merely loosened the end of his sash and passed it over his left shoulder to read the Psalter. Of devotion there was no appearance. The bishop and deacons talked to each other and to the members of the congregation in the midst of their prayers, and seemed to attach no meaning at all to the words they read. The church differed from those at Jamálava and Ada only in being a little larger, and, like all we saw, the altar was in the eastern extremity. Such a position of the altar, the bishop informed us, is always observed by the Nestorians, and they never pray without turning the face to the east.

He confirmed what Mar Yohanna had said respecting the bread of the eucharist, and the cross stamped upon it, but added, that several loaves are often consecrated at the same time to be given to the people, and that two are always reserved for the priest and deacon. Our consecrating the elements in unconsecrated places seemed also to stumble him. He denied that they practise infant communion, but could mention no particular age when children are first admitted to the ordinance. They are sometimes allowed to come at five, but never at three years of age. We inquired what preparation is deemed necessary before partaking of the communion. He replied that they fast from the evening before until its celebration, whether it be at morning or at mid-day prayers; and that they settle their quarrels so as to be at peace with each other. Auricular confession they never practise, but the priests read to the assembled congregation a general confession embracing five sins. The elements are received by the people standing before the door of the sanctuary. Each one, he said, stoops forward a little with his hand open under his chin, while the priest breaks off a bit of the bread and puts it in his mouth. He then goes in the same posture to the deacon, and drinks the wine from a bowl in his hand. The bishop was careful to say, as if it was a point of some importance,



and inquiring at the same time our own practice, that the people are all served first, then the priest partakes, and last of all the deacon.

We could not learn from him that the canons of the Nestorian church designate any particular age for the baptism of infants. It can be performed, he said, only on the days when the eucharist is celebrated, and is generally attended to on some festival. The body of the child is immersed in water up to the breast or chin, and the priest, taking up water in his hand three times, pours it upon his head, first in the name of the Father, then in the name of the Son, and last in the name of the Holy Ghost, making each time the sign of the cross upon the top of the head. When infants die before baptism, he thought like Mar Yohanna, that their souls go neither to heaven nor to hell, but to a place prepared specially for them.

*March 16.* A continued fall of rain detained us the whole day at Ardishai, and confined us to the bishop's house. It consisted of one very large room, twenty or thirty feet high, lighted by only small holes in the terrace, and warmed by only a tannoor, which was used for all the purposes of cooking. Besides carpets, felts, mats, mattresses, coverlets, and cushions (the usual furniture of a Persian peasant's house), we noticed an additional article which deserves a description. It was an instrument commonly used here for cleaning cotton, and consisted merely of two plain cylinders about eighteen inches long, one of wood four or five inches in diameter, and the other of iron less than an inch in diameter. The larger was turned by a crank, and being in contact with the smaller, turned that also. The fibres of the cotton are drawn between them by the motion, and thus stripped from the seeds, which, being too large to pass through, roll down quite naked. The process is slow, owing to the smallness of the machine, but the work is well done. We slept at night upon the carpets where we had sat during the evening, and the family of the bishop's mother, males and females, scattered themselves promiscuously on the ground, each under his coverlet. They were called to prayers in the church at daybreak, but we observed no devotions in the family while we remained in it, except that one man on rising went through a series of prostrations and kneelings, which might, but for the frequent signs of the cross that accompanied them, have been mistaken for a part of a Mohammedan's prayers. The

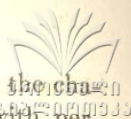


bishop informed us that the Nestorians have forms of private prayer, which are observed by some, but neglected at the option of every individual.

The rule of fasting which Mar Yoosuf had prescribed to himself was not observed by Mar Gabriel. He hesitated not to smoke before evening prayers yesterday, and he ate to-day with the family after mid-day prayers, but until that hour all strictly fasted. The bishop at Ada had gratified us by declining to drink wine, on the ground that it is not allowed during lent. But his brother of Ardishai urged us to join him in a glass of brandy. We proposed to substitute wine as a more innocent beverage, but he likewise would not touch it. It could of course be no rule of temperance that proscribed its use, as we had at first hoped; and we found, on inquiry, that only a little fat, usually put in the jars to preserve it, makes it a forbidden drink, while brandy not being thus contaminated, may be drunk with impunity. Surely this is straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel!

All the inhabitants of the village observed the day as a holiday, abstaining entirely from labour; but not one could tell us why, nor whether it is dedicated to any saint or not. The bishop said, that the time of many of their festivals, and especially of Easter, corresponds with the Armenian calendar, but others fall on different days. Christmas is observed on the 25th of December. He admitted that they worship the saints, and that prayers to them are scattered through many of their church books. We inquired if the body of the virgin was taken up to heaven, and were at first answered, without hesitation, that it is still in the grave; on recollecting, however, that his church observes the festival of the Assumption, he hesitated, and said he must look in his books.— Observing him and a deacon leaving the house in the course of the morning, with a prayer-book and censer, we inquired their object. They were going, he replied, to say prayers over the grave of a person lately dead, a ceremony that is performed on the day of the burial, and on the third, seventh, and fortieth days afterward. Masses for the dead ought also to be celebrated on the same days, but none had been said this morning, as their church was a little out of order.

While we were occupied most of the day in writing, the bishop spent much of it in reading and chanting from our Syriac Testament, and seemed so much pleased with it, that we finally gave



him a copy. He declared that he had never before seen the character in which it was printed, and still he read it with perfect ease. It was his opinion, however, that it could not be read by his clergy generally. Its language he pronounced to be the same with that of their church books, and not intelligible to the people. But he shewed us a beautiful copy of the Pentateuch, accompanied by an explanation which he said the common people can understand. Among his books was one with now and then an Arabic sentence interspersed, which seemed to indicate that it was a Syriac grammar upon the Arabic system, but the bishop could not tell us what it was.

In the evening a Chaldean joined the family circle of the bishop, and an animated argument upon several of the doctrines of the papal church was introduced, by our alluding to the history of the defection of England from the faith and the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the pope. I can only touch very briefly upon the different topics discussed.—The bishop inquired if we confess to our priests, and expressed his satisfaction at finding that we agree with his own church in confessing to God only. The Chaldean said, “Is it not written, ‘Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven?’” His argument was answered, by our reminding him that this assurance was given to the apostles who were inspired, and not to their successors. He soon found another, by asking if the right of absolution was not enjoined in the command of our Saviour to Peter, to forgive an offending brother not “until seven times, but until seventy times seven?” He was made to see, that what Peter was ordered to forgive, was merely a sin against himself, and not sins in general. Christ’s direction to the leper to shew himself to the priest, was then pleaded as a precedent in favour of auricular confession to the priesthood. But the topic was concluded by our shewing, that the custom alluded to was merely a sanitary regulation of the Mosaic law.—We asked the Chaldean if the priests of his church administer the cup to the laity at communion. “They do,” said he, “as Christ directed. They break the consecrated wafer in two parts, and dipping one in the wine, make the sign of the cross with it over the other, and then give it to the people.” “Which?” we asked, “the one dipped in the wine?” He confessed, with apparent reluctance, that it was the other. We then requested the bishop to read Matt. xxvi. 26—28,



that we might see how Christ directed the ordinance to be administered. He did so from our Syriac Testament, laying a significant emphasis upon the command—"Drink ye *all* of it;" and the Chaldean was silenced.

We mentioned, as another difference between us and the papists, that we admit to our communion members of other denominations. "Why, so do we," said the bishop, "we consider all Christians as brethren; but these papists admit none but papists to their communion." We assured him that their church goes still farther, and teaches that none but papists can be saved. The Chaldean would have explained the doctrine into a general declaration, that none can be saved who depart from the fundamental principles of the gospel. But Antonio silenced him by opportunely declaring that the papists once converted him, and one of the dogmas he learned from them, was, that out of the Apostolical Roman Catholic Church there is no salvation.—The principle of the papal church, was next mentioned by us, which forbids the people to have the Scriptures in a language they can understand. It was new to the bishop, and he asked, with great astonishment, the reason of it. We replied, that the papists can best tell; but assured him that it is so strictly enforced, that not only are people who happen to come in possession of them often obliged to give them up, but we have actually known them to be burned.—The subject of images, too, was brought forward in an inquiry by the bishop, if we use them in any of our religious ceremonies. We assured him that we regard them as utterly prohibited by God, and referred him to Exod. xx. 4, for our authority. He turned to the Pentateuch, and read the second commandment with evident satisfaction, as a triumphant argument against the Chaldean. The occasion was embraced to declare to the company many particulars respecting the image-worship of the papists, especially as practised at Malta, most of which were new and surprising to them. The bishop manifested the deepest interest in the whole conversation, and all but the Chaldean seemed highly delighted.

It was to us, also, an evening of the most intense gratification. I had never found among the native Christians of Western Asia, any who would go such lengths with me in arguing against the papists. To see that the passages of Scripture appealed to in proof of arguments were so well understood, was likewise pleasing. In fact, in all our intercourse with the Nestorians, their frequent and



generally correct quotations from Scripture were quite noticeable. They seemed to feel its force as a standard of ultimate appeal. And it is a striking fact, that, with the exception of one reference to the Apostolical Canons, no resort was had at all to the authority of Fathers and Councils. We were also not sorry to give countenance, by such an argument, to the Nestorians, in opposition to the Chaldeans. For the latter seemed always to announce themselves as Roman Catholics, with a tone of self-congratulation for their orthodoxy, and assurance that we would esteem them the more for it. While the Nestorians declared their sentiments with diffidence, as if they expected a frown from every body, and especially from Europeans, for their heresy. It was not unimportant to shew them, that they are not alone in their disapprobation of papacy.

*March 17.* I have mentioned that we left Tebriz with the intention of performing the circuit of the lake of Oormiah. We were extremely anxious to extend our journey into the heart of the Kürdish mountains, and visit in person Mar Shimón and the independent Nestorians. But all our English friends at Tebriz united in declaring that region entirely inaccessible. Not that among the Nestorians themselves we should not be well received, and be perfectly safe, but the Kürds which surround them are treacherous and blood-thirsty robbers, entirely beyond the control of the Persian government. Dr. Schultz, a learned German, travelling under the auspices of the king of France, had lately succeeded in reaching Kochannes; and the patriarch and his people treated him well; but on his return he was murdered by the very guard which had been given him by a Kürdish beg for his protection. The impracticability of entering the mountains was affirmed also at Khósrova, at Ada, and at other places among the Nestorians; and even Mér-gaver, the nearest mountainous district to Ardishai, was said to have recently defied the power of the governor of Oormiah. We learned also that the Kürds around Sooldooz, at the southern extremity of the lake, were in a state of insubordination, which very much endangered the passage by that route. The existence of the plague at Marágha had already made us begin to doubt the expediency of continuing in that direction; and this additional obstacle now completed our decision to return by the way that we had come. To vary the route a little, we determined to-day to turn to the west of the main road from Oormiah to Salmás, about as far





as Ada is to the east of it, and visit another Nestorian bishop named Oorahám (Abraham), at Armoood-agháj.

We left Ardishai at an early hour, and for awhile took the direct road to Oormiah. To avoid the plague, however, we refused to go through it, and only passed along in sight of its walls. The plain maintained in this direction its general character for beauty and fertility, and as we passed across several ploughed fields, we were made more sensible of the lightness of its soil by the depth to which our horses sunk into it at every step. Vineyards were numerous in every part, and like the gardens were invariably inclosed by a wall, while nothing separated the fields of grain from the open common. Both the vineyards and the gardens generally contained small houses, which reminded us of Matt. xxi. 33, and Is. i. 8, and we asked our guide this morning what was their object. He replied, that they afford shelter and lodgings in the summer to persons who defend the vineyards and gardens from thieves, and cultivate them and gather the vintage.

Armoood-agháj is a very small village, inhabited, in about equal numbers, by moslems and Nestorians, lying near the foot of the mountains on the northern side of the plain about two fúrsakhs from Oormiah, and five from Ardishai. The bishop was absent in a distant village, and though urged to stop while his family should send for him, we preferred seeking for better accommodations in the larger village of Koosy, about a mile distant. We were received at Koosy, into a room similar in size and appearance to that which we had occupied at Ardishai, and the people treated us, as did the Nestorians generally, with hospitality, attention, and respect. Fewer assembled than at the last two villages, to visit and converse with us; but they were not without their complaints. Our host affirmed that government exacts from him 20 tománs per annum for his family, and two-thirds of the produce of his farm!

At evening prayers we were pained by an unusual share of that want of reverence for sacred things, which was generally observable among the Nestorians, both in church and in conversation upon religious topics. The ceremonies differed little from what has been elsewhere noticed. Incense was burned; the officiators wore only their ordinary dress, except the sash and the band for the left shoulder, used by the deacon in reading the Psalter, which were in this instance ornamented by several crosses; and each one as he entered, kissed the cross, the hand of the bishop, and of his fellow-



worshippers. The women, who had in every church occupied the farther extremity, and never came forward to perform this ceremony, were observed here to have a cross suspended upon the wall near them, which they kissed on entering, and then did the same to the hands of each other.

The priest followed us to our room, and spent the evening; but we found him capable of giving but little information. He confessed that he was but eighteen years of age, and we judged from his appearance that he was no more than sixteen. His father, who was the former priest, had died the year before of the epidemic, and he had been ordained since. Not that the office of priest is hereditary, for all agreed that it is not; but the choice of the village, which alone determined the succession, happened to fall upon him. They confirmed the fact, that the episcopate is hereditary, and mentioned the see of Nazy, a village not far distant, which is at present vacant, in consequence of the heir's being too young to receive ordination, and not having yet completed his studies.

I have already mentioned that we found no printed books among the Nestorians, and suggested that their alphabet has perhaps never been printed. We inquired in every place for books, but, with the exception of the grammar at Ardishai, we found only the books of the church; and they were very scarce. The Psalter, the Gospels, and Epistles, in separate volumes, and divided into lessons for the daily service, were possessed by every church; but in Jamálava the two latter were carried every night to the house of the bishop, for fear they would be stolen. Two churches also possessed the Pentateuch; but no entire copy of the Bible was heard of any where. Indeed the Chaldean priest at Khósrova confessed that one is hardly to be found. He possessed it himself only in the Syriac of Walton's Polyglott, a work which he had procured, we understood him to say, because the entire Bible does not exist in the Nestorian character. He assured us that the Nestorian catalogues of the books held to be canonical, embrace precisely the same that are acknowledged by the papal church. We asked only a few questions on this point; but the bishop at Jamálava informed us that the Apocalypse, the epistle of James, and Solomon's song, are among the books received by them as canonical. Some of their manuscripts were fine specimens of the Estrangelo; especially two, which were copies of the Gospels and Epistles, in the possession of Mar Gabriel of Ardishai. But an extreme unwillingness was



universally manifested to part with any, except the Psalter, for the alleged reason that only one copy was owned by a village. The missal of the church at Koosy had been recently stolen, and the priest was consequently unable to celebrate the eucharist. We finally succeeded in purchasing at Jamálava a copy of the Psalter in the Nestorian character, and another of the epistles in the Estrangelo. The latter was written in 1527 of the era of the Seleucidæ, which is still used by the Nestorians, and commences 311 years before Christ.\*

We inquired at Koosy, as usual, for manuscripts, and were told that the village possesses a very venerable one, written, according to the date inserted by the writer, three hundred years before the Mohammedan era. We had heard of its fame at Ardishai, and at our request to see it were conducted to the house of the priest where it was kept. He crossed himself, and the by-standers uncovered their heads, as he opened the box which contained it; and ten silk bags and handkerchiefs which covered it, were then carefully removed one by one. It proved to be a neat and well-preserved copy of the New Testament upon parchment, in small Estrangelo characters. After examining it awhile, without touching it, we returned to our lodgings. In proof of its great sanctity and miraculous virtues, the company affirmed that even the moslems believe in it; for they not only bring Christians from distant villages to swear upon it, in order to obtain from them a true oath, but are even afraid to swear falsely by it themselves. When asked for the reason of such a fear, they declared that the falsity of an oath is detected at the time, by a miraculous moving of the leaves of the book, and afterward death, or some terrible calamity, invariably befalls the false swearer or his nearest friends. Many instances of such effects of its miraculous powers had been known by them, and they confessed that so great was their fear, that they trembled to speak of it. We inquired if any other manuscripts of a similar antiquity are possessed by their countrymen, and were answered, that there are many in the mountains, one of which is not very far distant, in the district of Gárvar. They affirmed that it is not so venerable as this, but immediately, as if afraid of defaming it, modified the expression by saying, that nothing however could be said against that.—Our offers to purchase such an adored

\* These manuscripts are now deposited in the Library of the Board at the Missionary Rooms.



manuscript, were of course not listened to a moment. Other books were brought forward; but as they had only a single copy of each for their own use, none could be bought.

*March 18.* We left at an early hour for Jamálava, distant about five fúrsakhs. After four or five miles we were hailed and stopped by a man in pursuit of us. It was Mar Oorahám, of Armood-agháj, who, it appeared, had been sent for yesterday by his friends to a village a fúrsakh or two distant, contrary to our injunction. Finding, on reaching home this morning, that we were gone, he had pushed on after us. His first words confirmed our fears that he supposed us to be political agents. The Nestorians, he said, were the last Christians left in the hands of the moslems; their oppressions had become so great that they could be endured no longer; and they were determined to leave the country. Would not the kings assist them? We replied that we were simple ministers of the gospel, and had no connection with such subjects, nor any information respecting them. "They told me," said he, "near Ada, where you passed, that you travelled under the name of Englishmen, but were really Russians; are you not Russians?" We assured him we were not, and that he would oblige us by contradicting such a report: that we were ministers of the gospel, who, having come from a very distant land, were now among the Nestorians on a religious visit. Immediately he expressed his regret that we had not found him at home, as he should have taken great pleasure in answering our inquiries, and if we wanted books he had them. We were ourselves sorry not to have more time with him, for he seemed the most intelligent Nestorian bishop we had seen. He was mounted on a good horse, was well dressed in the usual Kürdish costume, had a sword hung by his side, and a bishop's staff in his hand.

When speaking of books, he took from his saddle-bags a copy of the *Takhsa* and *Sünhedüs*. The former, he said, contained the offices for the eucharist, for ordination, and for the consecration of churches; the three functions which a bishop is most liable to be called upon to perform: the ordination of the five grades below him, and the consecration of churches, being in fact his peculiar duties. The canons of his church, he assured us, require the eucharist to be celebrated every Sunday and Friday throughout the year. It is actually celebrated every day in three out of the seven weeks of lent, every Sunday and festival generally, and whenever a



baptism is to be performed, or a mass is required for the dead. As a preparation for communion, they practise not that confession, he said, in which sins are told in the ear of a priest, and money is given; but if a man's conscience is burdened, he sometimes goes, of his own accord, to his priest, and tells him he is a sinner. He then fasts three days in the church, praying and putting ashes under him; and on the morning of the eucharist, the priest, laying his hand upon his head, reads over him an absolution. The communion is then administered to him.—The Sünhedüs, he said, contains all the laws and canons of the church, and by it a bishop can decide any question that is liable to come before him. In the case of a proposed marriage, for example, he can determine from it whether the parties are within the forbidden grades of consanguinity; which are, he affirmed, in the Nestorian church sixty-five in number, including, as I understood, some grades of the affinity that exists between sponsors and god-children. The same book contains also the law which allows the priests to marry after ordination; “for,” said he, “we do not understand the passage which intimates that an elder should be the husband of one wife (Tit. i. 6), as limiting the number that he may have successively, but as prohibiting him to have more than one at a time.” We concluded, from his description, that the Sünhedüs contains most of the peculiarities of the Nestorian church, and were very desirous of purchasing it, but he would sell neither it nor the Takhsa.—In the course of the conversation, he forced upon us a present of a large quantity of raisins, which he had brought in his saddle-bags. We happened at the moment to pay our guide a penabád for his services, and were embarrassed to see the bishop to take it with a smile of thanks, as if it were intended for himself. It seemed doubtful, however, whether an apology was most due from us for giving, or from him for receiving so small a gratuity, and we suffered him to put it quietly in his pocket.

Our friends at Jamálava seemed rejoiced to see us among them again; but the bishop, with whom we had conversed so much a week before, was absent. The eucharist had not been celebrated in any of the churches we had visited, and we expressed to the priest our regret at not having an opportunity to witness the ceremony. He said that to gratify us it should be performed to-morrow, though otherwise it would not have occurred until Sunday morning.

*March 19.* We were awaked when the priest went to church



at early dawn. Himself and a younger son, who officiated as deacon, were three when we entered, saying prayers alone, and only two or three others came in after awhile. He soon sent word to us, that, as they were only saying the morning prayers which were long, we should do well to return to our room, and he would call us in time to witness the mass. After somewhat more than an hour, a messenger informed us that it was begun. As we entered, a curtain was withdrawn from the door of the sanctuary, and the priest, with his son the deacon, appeared within. He was clothed in a white flowing robe with sleeves; a dark coloured fillet around his loins answered as a sash; and a second one was passed around his neck and tucked under the other in front. A white mantle, consisting apparently of only a plain piece of cotton or silk cloth, so long as to trail upon the floor, and so broad as to cover his hands when they were raised in supplication, was soon thrown over his shoulders, and completed his dress. The dress of the deacon was similar, except that he had not the mantle, and instead of the fillet around the neck, a plain white band was passed over his right shoulder, and tucked under the sash before and behind. Their heads were bare during the whole ceremony; and their robes altogether were extremely simple, and not unbecoming.

While chanting the service, they walked continually about the sanctuary, the deacon burning incense, and the priest repeatedly making prostrations on either side, and then directly in front of the altar, approaching it kneeling, and kissing the ground at every step, and finally kissing the altar itself as he reached it. Besides occasionally responding, the people in the body of the church took no part in the services, except that the deacon came forward once and touched the hands of one of them, and then the kissing of hands passed around the company. At length a curtain being dropped before the sanctuary, hid the officiators from our view, and a bell commenced ringing within, which nearly drowned the chanting. At the signal of a smaller bell, the whole congregation crossed themselves, and bowed their heads a minute or two in silent adoration. The curtain was soon removed, and the priest advanced to the door of the sanctuary with the Gospel, and read it to the people by the light of a candle held by the deacon. He seemed occasionally to chant a verse, and then to read an explanation of it in his natural tone. The people carefully uncovered their heads, and listened with the greatest reverence: and though no notice was





taken of our neglecting to imitate them in their other ceremonies, they now expressed dissatisfaction that one of us should remain with his head covered, saying to him that it was the Gospel. Immediately after, the priest brought out the bread in a napkin, a part of which was passed around his neck, and the deacon brought out the wine in a metal bowl with a napkin under it, which hung down in front. Each communicant in succession stood before the priest, who broke off a bit of the bread and put it into his mouth, while he held his hand open under his chin to catch any crumbs of the consecrated element that might chance to fall. Then standing in like manner before the deacon, each drank from the bowl in his hand, wiping his mouth afterward upon the napkin that hung in front, to remove any drops that might have adhered to his lips or his beard, and then returned to his place with his hand upon his mouth. One or two children went up, and partook of the bread and not of the wine. A passage (perhaps a hymn) chanted from the Takhsa by the priest, succeeded, and the ceremony was closed by his pronouncing the blessing. He soon brought the remnants of the bread to the door of the baptistery, and there ate them with several who had communicated. The whole occupied just an hour. We saw nothing of any confession or absolution read to the people, but it may have been done before we arrived. The only parts of the service addressed to the assembly, while we were there, were the lesson from the Gospel, the passage chanted from the Takhsa, and the blessing. The whole was much more simple than any mass we had ever attended; and in the mode of communion at the end, almost a scriptural simplicity might be recognized.

We left Jamálava immediately after these ceremonies were concluded, and reached Tebriz again in health on the 23d of March.

Permit me to add to this report of our visit to the Nestorians, some considerations respecting the expediency of establishing a mission in this part of Persia.—We have little to say, in addition to the account already given of the Persian *moslems*, to enable you to judge what would be the prospects of a mission established specially for them. Such a mission we are not prepared decidedly to recommend; though our persuasion is strong, that a missionary, while directing his attention expressly and primarily to the Christian population, would find many occasions and means of doing good to the followers of Mohammed also, as a secondary branch of



labour.—The *Armenian* population is so small and dispersed, that any considerable number could with difficulty be reached; not to mention another certainly important consideration—their extreme degradation. In hesitating to recommend these two classes of people as promising objects of missionary labour in Persia, we are of course to be understood as declining to propose the city of Tebriz for a missionary station.—But to the *Nestorians* of Oormiah we would specially direct your attention. That Abbas Mirza would, without doubt, patronize missionary efforts for their improvement, and in fact for the improvement of all his Christian subjects, we received the unanimous testimony of all the members of the English embassy. Equally decided assurance was given us that missionary families in Oormiah, would be secure from any oppression; for besides being favourably regarded by the prince, the ambassador also would protect them. Among others who accorded with these sentiments were two gentlemen who had resided some time in that province; and one of them added that the climate is very fine. Our own impression respecting the climate, from the location of the district, and the dampness and fertility of its soil, is, that it must, at certain seasons of the year, be hot, and productive of febrile affections. To the hostile incursions of the predatory *Kürds*, too, it seems to us evident that Oormiah must be exposed, whenever the government of Persia is disturbed by either internal or foreign causes. But we must not calculate too closely the chances of life. Missionaries to any part of the great field—the world, should ever go forth with a martyr's spirit, “hazarding their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

That religious instruction is needed by the Nestorians, this and the preceding letter will have sufficiently convinced you. How it would be received by them experiment alone can fully determine. We cannot but refer you, however, to their extreme liberality toward other sects, their ideas of open communion, and their entire rejection of auricular confession (that efficient police system of the other old churches), as considerations which have produced in our minds a firm conviction, that a mission to the Nestorians would meet with far fewer obstacles than among any other of the old churches. The week that we passed among them was among the most intensely interesting of our lives. For myself, I felt a stronger desire to settle among them at once as a missionary than among any people I have ever seen. A mission family there would





indeed be lonely. Its nearest European acquaintances would be the English at Tebriz, about a hundred miles distant, and even they will remain at that city no longer than it is the seat of Abbas Mirza's government. Among the natives there would be no intelligent society. If the notions of the Nestorians are like those of the Armenians at Shoosha and Tebriz, of which there is little doubt, no female domestics even could be obtained. Great facilities for communication with home by letter would be afforded through the English embassy, which receives an express by a tartar from Constantinople, and returns one about once a month. The distance, which is eleven or twelve hundred miles, is usually performed in eighteen or twenty days. Boxes would come expeditiously and safely from Constantinople, by way of Trebizond and Erzroom, making a land carriage from Trebizond of five or six hundred miles.

Self-denying indeed and laborious would be the lot of a missionary in Oormiah. But let him enter the field with the self-devotion which reconciled Brainerd to a wigwam, and inspired Martyn with that noble sentiment—"Even if I never should see a native converted, God may design by my patience and continuance in the work to encourage future missionaries"—and contentment also will be a portion of his cup. And as he plants one truth after another in the mind of an ignorant Nestorian, and sees it take root and bear fruit, thus restoring to the oldest of Christian sects "the faith once delivered to the saints," and beginning the conquests of Christianity in a kingdom where it has never triumphed, a joy which the world knows not of will likewise be his. He will feel, also, the advantage of his position; that he has found a prop upon which to rest the lever that will overturn the whole system of Mohammedan delusion, in the centre of which he has fixed himself; that he is lighting a fire which will shine out upon the corruptions of the Persian on the one side, and upon the barbarities of the Kùrd on the other, until all shall come to be enlightened by its brightness, and the triumph of faith will crown his labour of love.

## LETTER XXII.

FROM TEBRIZ TO KARA-KELEESEH.

Leave Tebriz—Precaution against robbers from Khoy—Enter the country of the Kürds—Arts of our guide at Zoraba—and at Keleeseh—Cross the Turkish frontier—Bayezeed—Dia-deen—Uch-keleeseh, or Soorp Garabéd—Incivility of the Kürds—Peculiar doctrines of the Armenians respecting the nature of Christ—Habits of the wandering Kürds—Pastoral observations—Kara-keleeseh.

DEAR SIR,

BEING unable, on our return from Oormiah, to obtain any satisfactory information from Bagdád, we determined to move toward Constantinople by the usual caravan route through Bayezeed to Erzroom. We at first engaged horses to accompany a large caravan, but they were seized by government for the transportation of army stores, and our contract of course failed. The disappointment was fortunate, however, for the motions of the caravan were so slow that we actually reached Erzroom many days before it. Horses were next engaged to take us alone to Bayezeed in seven days. With them we left Tebriz on the 9th of April, and on the 11th reached Khoy, by the route which has been already described.

*April 12.* The acting British envoy had the kindness to furnish us, on leaving Tebriz, with letters to the authorities at Khoy. We caused them to be presented yesterday, with a petition for passports and a guide to Bayezeed. The passports were given on the spot, and the guide promised in the morning, but it was late today before he presented himself. He was a *ghoolám*, or page, of the prince, and a complete Persian in politeness and duplicity, but was small and young. The part he was to act, however, required neither courage nor strength. The road from Khoy to Bayezeed is not beset by openly lawless banditti, or a regular guard would have been necessary. The only risk is a slight one from Kürdish borderers in crossing the frontier, and we took this attendant as an insurance in case of accident from them. For his presence made the Persian government responsible for whatever might befall ourselves or our property.

We left Khoy at a quarter before 11 A.M., and at 1 P.M. reached the extremity of the plain just beyond the village of Pereh. In



the warm recesses at the foot of the mountains were a number of black tents of Kürds. They were just leaving their winter-quarters in the villages of the plain, and beginning to ascend the mountains for their nomadic summer residence. The mountains before us might be considered the eastern boundary of the country of the Kürds, being entirely overrun in the summer by their flocks. They are here subject indeed to the Persian government, and in the parts nearest Khoy contain some moslem villages of the Turkish language and of the sheey faith; but, extending southward between the lakes of Oormiah and Van, they become more exclusively the possession of the Kürds; and finally, in the Hakáry country are entirely independent. Our ascent of them was gradual but long. An arable tract succeeded with some villages upon it. At the farthest of them, named Zoraba, we stopped at a quarter past 6 P.M., having made five fúrsakhs.

A room was prepared for us at the direction of our guide, who claimed, also, to act as *mihmandár*, and provide not only lodgings but food for us gratis. We had been cautioned against such a mode of entertainment as being offensive to the people, and in the end troublesome to the traveller, and therefore informed him, that we had applied for merely a guide, and if the prince had clothed him with the powers of a *mihmandár*, it was indeed an act of kindness, but one which we felt at liberty to decline, and we should pursue our usual course of ordering our own dinner and paying for it. He took it ill that we entertained so low ideas of his own importance and of the prince's hospitality as to suppose that he had been sent merely to conduct us, and not to be wholly divested of his assumed character, he ordered four or five fowls for himself, and food for our muleteers and their horses. But the supper and the honour of the office were not all he sought. He should give the *kétkhoda*, he said, a written acknowledgment for perhaps double the value of what was consumed, which would be accepted at the prince's treasury in lieu of taxes to that amount from the village. What was gained by the embezzlement would be divided between them.

April 13. We started at a quarter after 5 A.M. and travelled the whole day over mountains, with the exception of one plain about midway five or six miles in extent. Several villages appeared upon it, and the structure of their houses shewed that we were leaving the Persian part of Armenia. Instead of naked mud

walls, they had walls of stone half buried beneath the ground, in the style we had noticed on first approaching Erzroom, and which now continued from hence to that city. The mountains retained the striking feature, common to all we saw in Persia, of entire nakedness of tree or shrub, but they assumed more of the swelling form of those around Erzroom, and were adapted to afford an immense extent of pasturage. We found upon the higher parts extensive and deep banks of snow; and it snowed for several hours the early part of the day.

Toward evening we crossed another elevated plain, perhaps eight miles long, with snow still lying upon it in several places, and at 6 P.M. stopped at a village on its farther side, 10 fúrsakhs from Zoraba. It is named *Keleeseh*, or the church, from the ruins of an old church around which it is built. Its former inhabitants were Armenians; but they had emigrated to the Russian provinces, and it was now occupied by a few poor moslem families from Eriván. They completely disregarded the authority of our guide; and, after scolding long, and threatening them with the wrath of the prince to the complete destruction of their village, he was unable to procure us even a room. We applied money instead of threats, and obtained whatever we wanted, not, however, without a serious complaint from him that we were paying the villagers what was his own perquisite. For he now confessed that he expected, in addition to the embezzlement already alluded to, to receive himself at the end of the journey, for providing for us gratis, what we should otherwise have paid to those who entertain us. Such, he said, is one of the ways in which the prince pays his servants, and it proved that our muleteers actually paid him last night, instead of our host, for their horses' barley and straw.

*April 14.* Leaving *Keleeseh* at half-past 5 A.M., we ascended and rode for an hour or two over a high and dreary mountain covered almost entirely with deep snow. It is perhaps the *Niphates* of the Greeks, and forms, we supposed, the boundary between Persia and Turkey, for the village where we spent the night is in Persia, and the next place is *Bayezeed* in Turkey. It was not an unfit place for border tales, and on its top five or six Persians from the district of *Ohajík* stopped us to complain that the men of *Bayezeed* had stolen from them cattle to the amount of 500 tománs, besides inducing five or six villages of their Armenian neighbours to remove into the Turkish territory. They had



pleaded for redress at Bayezeed, they said, in vain; and now begged that we, as *elchies* (embassadors), would present their case to their consul at Erzroom. We descended, at 8 o'clock, into the head of a plain extending to the west, and crossed a small stream running also in that direction, being probably one of the first branches of the Murád-chai. Turning northward, we were in full view of the back of mount Ararat, and apparently near it. It presented much the same aspect as when viewed from the valley of the Aras. The foot of it on this side is inhabited by a small body of that singular sect, the Yezedies, reputed worshippers of satan. They number about 300 families, and inhabit three villages, one of which is named Kara-boolák.

Continuing northward over a few barren hills, we came in sight of Bayezeed. It hangs romantically upon the side of a rugged precipice which rises some distance above it. A citadel, containing a well-built mosque and the pashá's extensive palace, occupies a lofty projection at the top. Westward extends a broad plain, which, according to an intelligent vartabéd at Uch-keleeseh, once formed a part of the Armenian canton of Gokaiovíd. If so, the mountain which now separates Persia from Turkey, was anciently the western boundary of Vasbooragán, and we are again in the province of Ararád.\* We entered the town at 11 A.M. It was in a miserable, ruined state, and we saw not one decent house besides the pashá's. Most of them were constructed like the underground cabins of the villages, the streets were obstructed by every species of filth, and nearly all the shops in the bazár, originally but very few, were deserted. The Russians had left behind them the same desolation as at Erzroom and at Kars.

The Armenians of Bayezeed are said once to have been numerous, but now there are only about 190 families of that nation. Their school has not been revived since the war. They have five priests, but no bishop, nor had they formerly one of their own, their town being included in the diocese of the bishop of Tateós Arakeál. The moslem inhabitants amount to only three or four hundred families. They are nearly all Kürds, Kürdish is the common language of the place, and, in fact, the whole pashalik of which it is the capital forms an integral part of Kürdistán. The pashá himself is of a native Kürdish family, but he receives his commands, if not his office, from the pashá of Erzroom, and has

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 108.



only the rank of two tails. His subordination seems now to be complete, and he no longer dares act the robber, as when M. Jaubert was here so long imprisoned and so cruelly treated. Soldiers of the sultan's new discipline were manœuvring with drum and fife in the citadel, and his own son was exercising himself in the European tactics. He was now absent on a visit to his superior at Erzroom, but his kakhia received our fermans with great respect; a tartar was immediately provided to conduct us safely to Erzroom; and, no regular posts having yet been established since the war, an order was offered us for horses from village to village. We accepted the tartar for the same reason that we had taken a guide from Khoy—to make the government responsible in case of accident; but fearing trouble in procuring the horses, we declined the order for them, and hired caravan horses for the whole distance.

*April 15.* We left Bayezed at a quarter before 8 A.M., and directed our course westward through the plain. In about an hour a small stream crossed our path, running to the right. It passes, we were told, around the Magoo side of Mount Ararat, and empties into the Aras between that mountain and Nakhchevân. It is probably the Dughmood of the Armenians, and Ak-chai of the Turks\*, though we did not learn its present name. Our prospect was extremely limited by fog and rain, but what we saw of the country was most desolate; not a village, nor hardly any cultivation appeared the whole day. Deep mud, caused by the storm, impeded our progress; one of our horses, all of which proved to be miserable, failed entirely before we had accomplished half the stage; and our tartar (himself a Kürd, in nation, language, and manners) occasionally pointed to heaps of stones upon graves along the road, to remind us how many murders had here been committed by Kürdish robbers. We finally crossed a small mountain, covered with snow of some depth, a part of which had fallen during the day, and descended to Diadeen, having accomplished six Turkish hours in nine.

A miserable ride was followed by more miserable accommodations. Diadeen, if we may credit the information of the vartabéd at Uch-keleeseh alluded to at Bayezed, occupies the site of the ancient Zarehavân (Zaruana), a town of some note in the history of Armenia. The modern village was, until recently, a place of

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 41.



some importance, and contained many Armenian families, with about forty shops. It has now the ruins of a walled citadel, which are occupied by a *mütsellim*, or governor. All the Christians, except three families, retired with the Russians, and only twenty or thirty poor moslem families occupy a few dilapidated cabins. They are all of Kürdish descent, and speak the Kürdish language. We found a corner in the house of an old Kürd, which sheltered us from the storm, but was exceeding small and dirty.

*April 16.* Diadeen stands on the northern bank of the eastern branch of the Euphrates, now called *Murád-chai*, or the river of Murád. After waiting awhile in the morning for the rain to cease, and for our muleteer to exchange his worn-out horse for one more serviceable, we started, and followed the uncultivated and deserted valley of the river westward to Uch-keleeseh, a distance of three hours. It is on the south side of the river, and, a few rods before reaching it, though the stream was swollen by the rain, a bridge of only three or four logs covered with weeds and earth, conducted us over without difficulty.

We spent the remainder of the 16th, and the next day, which was the Sabbath, at Uch-keleeseh. It is a convent of the Armenians, and is named by them *Soorp Garabéd* (the holy forerunner) after John the Baptist, of whom it contains a relic. This relic, however, the monks allowed, does not give to their convent so much notoriety as has been imparted to another near Moosh, dedicated to the same saint, by a relic of him inclosed in a tomb, which has been a great object of pilgrimage. The circumstance which contributes most to its celebrity, is, that it stands, according to the traditions of the nation, on the spot where St. Gregory baptized king Durtád. Its inmates assured us, that the church which is now standing, was built by the saint himself, 1525 years ago, just after that event. It is an extremely solid fabric of hewn stone, in the best ancient style of the country, with arches and vaults of fine proportions, and surpasses in size any Armenian church we had seen. Though evidently old, every part was in good preservation; but an almost entire absence of carpets, lamps, and every species of furniture and ornament, made it appear naked and poor. It stands at the base of an isolated mountain, and is surrounded by a high wall.

Being a usual station for the numerous travellers and caravans that pass between Tebriz and Erzroom, accommodations answer-



ing to a caravanserai had been fitted up on the outside. We were not honoured with an invitation to lodge within, and slept in an apartment connected with a stable. A Kürdish officer of the pashá, stationed here to secure the establishment from depredations, together with our tartar and muleteer, both likewise Kürds, claimed to share in our accommodations. But by attempering decision with fair words, we finally rid ourselves of them all. Perhaps a recent familiarity with Persian politeness, made us more sensitive to the boorishness of the Kürds; but we received the distinct impression, that we never met with a more uncivil people.

This convent is well known in the history of Armenian monasticism, and was for a time, in the beginning of the present century, the residence of a Catholicos who attempted to supplant the occupant of the see of Echmiádzin. No bishop now resides in it, and it is inhabited by only five vartabéds and a few deacons. They confessed that its former large income from pilgrims who stopped here on their way to Echmiádzin, and from its own glebes, has now almost entirely ceased. It owns several districts, but the emigration to the Russian territories had stripped them of tenants and of cattle, and, with the exception of what is raised by a few labourers, they remain unproductive. The superior represented that this emigration was effected by much urging and force on the part of the invaders. They carried him, he affirmed, as far as Echmiádzin, saying, that unless led by him, the people would not remove. Nearly all the Armenians have gone from these parts, and there is now no school in the convent, nor in the whole region around.

We had much conversation with the vartabéds on several topics, most of which have been already exhibited. One or two only have been reserved for this place. An allusion has been made in the introduction, to the commencement of the monophysite error among the Armenians, in consequence of which they were cut off from the general church, and have ever been regarded by the papists and the Greeks as heretical. A few seem to have escaped the heresy, and retain until the present time their connection with the oriental Greek church. For there now exists a small body of orthodox Armenians at Agn, on the western bank of the Euphrates, to the north of Arabkir. We met one of them at Echmiádzin. He was a banker, and one of the most gentlemanly Armenians we have seen. He informed us that his native place was 30 hours from Diarbekr,



30 from Sivás, and 16 from Maaden. In its vicinity are five villages, whose inhabitants speak the Armenian language, but are of the Greek church, and have a bishop of their own who is subject to the Greek patriarch of Constantinople. They formerly enjoyed many immunities, he said, from the Turkish government. But the Russians, when at Erzroom, induced them to rise, and they had since suffered much persecution. Another informant declares, that their church books are in Armenian, and when on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, they often prefer, in opposition to the wishes of the Greeks, to attend the Armenian services, because they understand them, while of the Greek they can comprehend nothing. The little clan of *Aguntsi*, or Armenians of Agn, are well known in the nation, and are especially celebrated as bankers. Some of them are among the wealthiest of that profession in Constantinople. We heard of no other Armenians belonging to the Greek church.\*

One of the *vartabéds* here seemed much better informed than the rest, and as we were conversing upon various topics, he introduced of his own accord the monophysitism of his church, by declaring that it receives only the first three of the general councils. Nestorius, he said, held to a perfect separation of the divinity and humanity of Christ, and Eutyches taught that his humanity is absorbed in his divinity; the Armenians, agreeing with neither, believe that the two natures are united in one, and anathematize all who hold to a different creed. In this he spoke advisedly, for it is well known that Eutyches is acknowledged by neither of the three monophysite sects, the Armenian, the Jacobite Syrian, and the Coptic, including the Abyssinian, to which his controversy gave birth; and that his alleged dogma of a confusion in the natures of Christ is the reason of his rejection, though perhaps a candid investigation will hardly find him chargeable with such an opinion.† Another intelligent ecclesiastic had told us, that not only does his nation hold to one nature, but also to only one will in Christ, thus

\* Though the Syrian nation, almost as generally as the Armenian, has been infected with heresy, either monophysite or Nestorian, a remnant of that too seems to have preserved its orthodoxy. We met at Shoosha a poor Syrian priest, who was begging aid to redeem his children, who had been seized by the Persians and sold into slavery at Van. His native village, he said, was Bzey, 8 days from Bagdad. He assured us that he was of the orthodox Greek church, and that in his vicinity in Mesopotamia there are six villages of the same faith. Their church service is in Syriac, which was likewise his native tongue, though he spoke also Arabic and Turkish imperfectly. They are subject to the Greek patriarch at Damascus, who is now the orthodox incumbent of the see of Antioch.

† *Assem. Bib. Orient.* vol. 2, intro. dissert. Mosheim, *Ecl. Hist.* vol. 1, p. 438, ed. Murdock.



making the Armenians partake in the monothelite as well as in the monophysite heresy.\*

We inquired of the vartabéd if his sect does not believe that Christ was perfect God and perfect man, and were assured that it does. Here too he had good authority, for the Armenian church believes and explains, as fully as any other, these two important points.† When asked, also, if the divine nature was so united to the human, as to suffer with it on the cross, he replied, that it is impossible for the divinity to suffer. But in this, though his church would agree with his explanation, he seemed at least to contradict her formularies; for Peter the Fuller's famous addition to the *trisagion* is still retained in them, and had been mentioned to us by another ecclesiastic, as one of the points of difference between the Armenians and the papists.

Perhaps you need to be told what the *trisagion* is. The following is a Latin version of the Greek account of it. "On the 24th of September, in the reign of Theodosius (A.D. 446), a great earthquake happened, such as is not recorded to have ever occurred before. So incessantly did the earth continue to be shaken, that all the people, with the emperor and the patriarch, went out of the city to a place called *Campus*. While the emperor Theodosius, the patriarch Proclus, and all the people, were there imploring the divine aid with supplications and litanies, suddenly a little boy from the midst of the crowd was caught up into the air. As all for fear cried out *Kyrie eleïson* [Lord have mercy], the boy descended, and addressing the people with a loud voice, required that the *trisagion* should thus be sung; *O holy God, holy strong, and holy immortal, have mercy upon us*. Having thus said, he gave up his soul to God, and the earthquake ceased."‡ So supernatural and so effectual a prayer soon obtained universal currency in the church; it has retained a place until the present time in the liturgies of several sects, and is still held in the highest veneration.

An addition was made to it by the monophysite Peter the Fuller, of Antioch, which laid him open to the charge of holding that the divinity was crucified; and, being adopted by the Armenians, has caused them to be regarded by other sects as fosterers of that heresy.§ It occurs several times in services of their church in the

\* Compare Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 3, p. 607.

† Armeno-Turkish Catechism, p. 4, ss.

‡ Summa Conciliorum, p. 388.

§ Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 2, intro. dissert.





following terms: "Holy God, and holy strong, and holy immortal, *who wast crucified for us*, have mercy upon us." In accordance with this expression, the vartabéd went on to say, notwithstanding his previous admission that God cannot suffer, that the divinity and the humanity of Christ were elevated upon the cross together, and both descended into the grave and remained there with the body. The latter assertion seemed countenanced by the clause in the creed already quoted, which says, "His body was placed in the grave with the divinity united." To our surprise he added a declaration which seemed to go the whole length of the old Julianist error of the incorruptibility of the body of our Saviour\*; saying, that had it remained in the grave, it would never have decayed. That such is the doctrine of his church, he attempted to shew by arguing that unleavened bread is used in her eucharist, rather as a symbol that no leaven of corruption was found in the body of Christ, than because our Saviour first used it at the institution of the ordinance, that being a mere Jewish custom; and he would fain confirm it from the Bible also, by quoting the expression, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, *neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*"

To complete our view of the heresies respecting the Trinity, charged upon the Armenians, it must be added, that though they believe in the eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal procession of the Spirit, firmly enough to satisfy the warmest admirers of the fathers†, they adhere to the favourite notion of the Greeks, in opposition to the Latins, that the Spirit proceeds from the Father only.—In this single case of the vartabéd only, during our whole journey, were these topics introduced by any with whom we conversed, unless in answer to our inquiries. The missionaries at Shoosha, also, assured us that they have rarely been advanced in their hearing, and have in no way interfered with or hindered their evangelical efforts among the Armenians. Add to these facts the nature of the subjects themselves, and I am persuaded you will agree with me, that missionaries may convert the whole nation to "the truth as it is in Jesus," without feeling themselves once called upon to agitate the questions, which, in the times of the first councils, rent the church asunder.

We availed ourselves of the vartabéd's declaration, that the deity

\* See Assem. Bib. Orient. vol. 2, intro. dissert. and p. 296.

† Armeno-Turkish Catechism, p. 4, 12.



and the human soul of Christ remained in the grave with his body, to ask him how his church can say in her creed, that Christ preached to the spirits in hades; and also reminded him of its equal inconsistency with the promise in Scripture, that the penitent thief should be with Christ in paradise (which we know from 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4, is in the third heaven) on the day of his crucifixion. He seemed willing to pass over the notion he had advanced, and which, so far as related to the human soul of Christ, was probably simply his own; and called upon *us* to reconcile Scripture with the creed, by explaining how Christ could have descended into hell, if he likewise ascended to paradise. Our explanation was direct, that we hold to no such creed, and that he did not descend into hell at all. "How, then," said he, "could he save the souls from thence?" "The good were already saved," we replied, "for it is impossible for us to believe that such men as Abraham, and Jacob, and David went into a place of torment, so long as the Bible does not affirm it. They must have gone to heaven at their death, while only the wicked were sent to hell, where they deserved to be." He argued that neither did he or his church believe the righteous to have been in a state of torment, but, on the contrary, in a state of happiness, as is represented in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, yet still not in heaven. Such an admission was declared to him to be equivalent to an acknowledgment that they were in heaven, as heaven is rather a *state* than a *place* of happiness.

He hesitated fully to allow such an inference, and asked if we do not believe that they deserved punishment for Adam's sin. We told him plainly, No: but that all men inherit from our first parents such a nature, that not a man upon earth fails of becoming an actual transgressor; so that in consequence of Adam's fall, all men sin and come to deserve punishment for their own offences. "But how," said he, "could sinful men be saved and go to heaven, when Christ had not yet died?" "Just in the same way," we answered, "that they are saved since his death. For we most firmly believe that had Christ not died, no man could ever have been saved. But that event was so fixed in the divine plan, as to be as much an atonement for sin in prospect as in retrospect; and believers were formerly pardoned for the sake of him who was to die, just as they are now pardoned for the sake of him who has died."



A word or two from other sources, added to the vartabéd's last two questions, will explain sufficiently the Armenian view of the old doctrine of Christ's descent into hell. The idea that his death could have any effect before it actually happened, is apparently lost sight of; and, Adam's sin being regarded as imputed to all mankind, so as to place them under the dominion of Satan, it is supposed that both the righteous and the wicked were at their death thrust by him into the prison of hell. Christ by his death not only so abolished original sin as to free those who were not yet dead from this satanic dominion, but he also descended into hell, and as he had dwelt upon the earth thirty-three years, saving all who believed on him here, so he preached thirty-three hours to the spirits in prison, and saved all who believed on him there.\* All unbelievers were left still in prison, or rather were thrust down to hell. For I ought to remark, that I have given the name *hell* to the place of departed spirits before Christ, in accommodation to the common mode of speaking among the Armenians, who usually call it *gehén*. They do not strictly consider it to have been really hell, however, but a place specially fitted up for this supposed imprisonment, and destroyed by Christ when he carried the redeemed spirits in triumph to heaven; and the Greek *hades*, or our old term *limbo*, would better express its more proper Armenian name *tjokhk*. You will perceive that neither the doctrine nor the place has any connection with *purgatory*.

*April 18.* We rose at 2, and started at a quarter past 4 A.M. The road re-crossed the river by a stone bridge after a mile or two; and we continued the remainder of the day along its northern side, generally in a low level near it. Wild geese and several species of ducks started up from its margin at almost every step. Uneven and woodless grazing lands on our right were bounded at a distance by a range of mountains; on the left was a similar tract without so distinct a limit. Patches of snow were frequent near our path at starting, and increased in number and size as we advanced. No cultivation at all appeared the whole day, and the falling walls of a deserted Armenian hamlet, now and then, explained the reason. We saw but two or three inhabited villages, and their occupants were Kürds.

Our tartar, yesterday and this morning, expressed many fears of robbers in to-day's ride. Get through this in safety, he said, and

\* Armeno-Turkish Catechism, p. 22, 76.



we need apprehend nothing more this side of Erzroom. And he would even insure us here, for the promise of a pair of shalwár. Such intimations from one who seemed, from his manners and nation, likely enough to be in league with all the robbers in the country, might seem adapted to produce some apprehension. The principal feeling actually excited, however, was vexation at the meanness of his conduct. Still we thought best not to betray it; and merely attempted to make him ashamed, that he, a *tartar*, should be so cowardly, where he saw us not afraid; reminding him at the same time, that it would be soon enough to solicit a present, when he had satisfactorily fulfilled his engagement.

Seeing no signs of danger as we advanced, we charged him again with timidity. He attributed the absence of wandering Kürds, either to accident, or to the season's not being yet sufficiently advanced: but said, that whenever, as warm weather comes on, they take into their heads to pasture here, every hill around is black with their tents. He doubtless spoke the truth; and I would add, that in general the country of the Kürds can be travelled with comparative safety in winter. For then they are confined by the snow to villages; and having a habitation and a name, the perpetrators of crime can be so easily detected that the power of law is felt. But when scattered over the mountains in their summer tents, they can commit a robbery and a murder to-day, and to-morrow, in some distant valley, effectually screen themselves from the search of justice.

Though no nomadic tents appeared, we passed several shepherds, probably from the neighbouring villages, carrying in their bosoms the lambs of the flocks they tended. The same scene had already frequently interested us, by presenting the source of the beautiful imagery of the prophet, "He shall lead his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." It is exhibited only at this season of the year; when lambs are frequently brought forth during the day at a distance from the fold. The new-comers being too weak to follow the flock in its roving after grass, are carried in the bosom of the shepherd, and not unfrequently they multiply so as to fill his arms before night. They are then taken to the fold, and guarded there until sufficiently strong to ramble with their dams. One of these inclosures, when the sheep return anxiously bleating in the evening from their day's pasture, and scores of hungry young ones are con-



ducted by shepherd's boys, each to its own mother, presents an amusing scene.

Throughout Armenia, neither sheep nor larger cattle, not only of professed shepherds, but of the common villagers, both Christians and moslems, are ever pastured without a keeper constantly to watch them; and invariably are they driven home, or to some inclosure, at night. The necessity of such precautions arises not so much from the fact that there are no fences in the country, as from danger of thieves and wild beasts. The man who should send his cows or his sheep to pasture alone, would have every reason to fear their being stolen before night; and to allow them to sleep out, would be making them an almost sure prey to ravenous animals.

Several beasts of prey abound in Armenia, including, in some parts, hyenas; but of them all wolves are the most common. We saw but five live ones during our journey. They were all in company, and trotted deliberately away from our path as we rose a hill just before reaching Nakhcheván, on our return from Eriván. Another dead one was exhibited to us among the Nestorians. He had burst into a sheepfold with such fury, as to wound two or three dogs which attacked him, and be but slightly checked by several deep thrusts from the daggers of the shepherds, until one at last let out his bowels and dispatched him; while in the meantime he found opportunity to feed his hunger upon the tails of several sheep, which, consisting entirely of fat, were first seized as the sweetest morsel. How forcible, when contrasted with such a state of things (as it probably originally was), is the language of the prophet, "That the Lord will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land, and his flock shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods!" To such security Western Asia is now, and perhaps has always been, an entire stranger; but in our favoured country it is fully enjoyed.

The immense pastures of Armenia, and especially of Kürdistán, supply nearly all the great markets of Turkey with mutton; and that is the principal animal food eaten by the inhabitants. The large flocks we encountered just after leaving Constantinople, have been already mentioned. Mr. Jaubert estimates the number of sheep which annually arrive at that capital from Kürdistán at 1,500,000, and says they make the journey in not less than seventeen or eighteen months. The sheep which are slain for the markets of Aleppo and Damascus, also, and even of Beyroot, come



from the same productive pastures. They are all of the fat-tail species; we saw no other until we descended the mountains toward Trebizond. Then a species resembling the common one of our own country was pointed out to us by a native of Tebriz in our company, with expressions of great astonishment at their slender tails, a sight he had never before witnessed.

The pastoral habits of the people of these regions, have led to the multiplication of a species of dogs of an enormous size, and excessively savage in appearance and disposition. So great a nuisance and so dangerous are they in every village, that we could never walk out in safety, without a heavy cudgel, or some one to guard us. Failing in one instance, between here and Erzroom, to take any such precaution, three wolf-like creatures pitched upon me while walking over the houses of a village, and threw me upon the ground. I expected nothing less than to be severely mangled; but the moment I fell they suddenly dispersed, and a few prints of their teeth in my clothes was the only harm I experienced.

We reached the Kor-chai, a tributary of the Murád, at half-past 1 P. M. Though its course from the mountains on the right can be but short, it was so swollen by the melting snows as to be forded with difficulty, and detained us nearly two hours in crossing it. A mile or two from the river, we reached Kara-keleeseh, 8 hours from Uch-keleeseh, and stopped for the night. It was a miserable hamlet of Persians (sheey moslems) who had fled from Eriván upon the capture of that place by the Russians. Among them was one Armenian, and, at the suggestion of our tartar, who, with the vartabéds at Uch-keleeseh, had recommended his house for its cleanliness, we sought for lodgings with him. The only place he could give us was a little stable, which also accommodated our horses. Our corner was hardly large enough for two to stretch themselves upon the ground; the terrace was broken in above it; and the house could furnish neither carpet, felt, nor hay to sleep upon. We could even procure little else to eat than a scanty portion of the coarsest black bread, and every thing bore marks of extreme filth. Our tartar, still adhering to his previous recommendation of the house, obstinately refused to seek quarters for us among the Persians; and it now first occurred to us, that the cleanliness for which he had extolled the Armenian, was merely ceremonial! The sünný, excluded from the house and hospitality of the sheey, for his own alleged ceremonial impurity, retorts the



charge, and gives the Christian the preference to his heretical Mohammedan brother.

Not only were we scantily furnished with provisions, but our horses also suffered. The whole village could hardly furnish a peck of straw. Indeed, so much had cultivation been neglected the preceding year, in consequence of the presence of the Russians, that we found a scarcity approaching absolute famine, all the way from Bayezed to Erzroom. With the greatest difficulty could we obtain food and provender for our small company; and the large caravan with which we thought of coming, and which we had passed near Khoy, was doubtless obliged to linger on the road until the grass had time to grow. The goodness of Providence in preventing our joining it was now visible.

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## LETTER XXIII.

FROM KARA-KELESEH TO ERZROOM.

District of Alashgérđ—Hospitality at Mollah Soleimán—Papal Armenians—Causes of the similarity between the papal and Armenian churches—Difficult and tempestuous passage of a mountain—Treatment by the Kürds at Dáhar—Descent of the mountain—Civility of the Armenians at Komatsór—Reach Erzroom—Present state of the city—Visit to the mosques—Ineligible location for a mission.

DEAR SIR,

AFTER much difficulty in settling with our host, who charged as high for our entertainment as if the recommendation we had had of his house had been correct, we left Kara-keleeseh at half-past 5 A.M. on the 19th of April, the day after my last date. The Murád-chai here turns to the left toward Melazgérđ (the ancient Manavazagérđ), and finds its way, by a pass imperceptible at this distance, through a mass of mountains now entirely white with snow. Inclining more to the right, we crossed in immediate succession some half a dozen tributary streams, so swollen by the melting snow as to threaten ourselves and our baggage with seri-



ous accidents. We passed them, however, successfully. Beyond, a somewhat more elevated though level tract extended to the mountain, which had thus far been on our right, but now turned southward and crossed our line of march. It is part of a continuous range, which, extending from mount Ararat in a circuitous course toward the junction of the two branches of the Euphrates, separates the valley of the Aras from that of the Murád-chai. The plain was covered throughout with snow from one to two feet or more in depth, and in a melting state; the road was only a narrow foot-path worn through it to the ground, and our horses, too fatigued by sinking at every stop into the soft mud at the bottom to walk straight, repeatedly staggered and fell.

According to the vartabéd at Uch-keleeseh, whose conversations have been reported, we had entered Pakrevánt, a canton of the ancient province of Ararád, at Diadeen, and were now in that of Vagharshagérd. The ancient town of that name is still called by the Armenians, and sometimes also by the moslems, Alashgérd, though its more common appellation is Toprák-kúlah.\* It is the capital of the district, and is considered almost impregnable. We left it at the base of the mountains an hour or two to the right, and took a nearer route directly toward the Köseh-dagh, a conical peak not unlike mount Ararat in shape, which rises to a lofty height from the topmost ridge of the same mountains, and is visible at a great distance. After passing four or five Kürdish villages, still in close winter quarters, we reached Mollah Soleimán, at the farther extremity of the plain, and stopped for the night.

Fatigued with the exertions of the day, dirty from the filth of our recent lodgings, and chilled with the keen air from the snows around us, we arrived dispirited and in ill humour with the inhospitableness of the country, the people, and the climate. A kind reception in such circumstances was doubly grateful. Mr. Dwight had preceded us to look for lodgings; and when I came up, two old ladies, with hospitality expressed in their countenances, were taking his travelling accoutrements from his horse. Him I found snugly seated in the corner of a large stable well spread with carpets and mattresses. The same kind matrons soon relieved me of my heavy outside garments, and seemed as anxiously to study our comforts as if we had been their own sons. We shall long remember the hospitality of Mollah Soleimán, so far superior was it to any we

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 124.



had experienced elsewhere during our whole journey. Nor shall we soon forget our lodgings. We were the companions of some forty or fifty cattle in an under-ground stable, ventilated by only a hole in our corner little larger than a man's hand. By the breath of its inmates, its temperature was raised almost to that of a vapour bath, so that the frosty external air that rushed in near us immediately precipitated a vapour resembling rain, and we were drenched in perspiration the whole night.

The village consisted of about 25 papal Armenian families, of whom our host was the priest. How long they had been papists we could not learn any farther than that his father was a papal priest before him, and that his grandfather visited Rome. Their papacy probably dates back to the time of the Jesuit mission at Erzroom, which, as we have already seen, had a station at Bayezed. He manifested no prejudices against us as protestants, and even seemed to consider us, from the mere fact that we were Franks, more like himself than his neighbours. An Armenian New Testament, which we gave him, was an acceptable present, and he thankfully received a Shoosha tract for his son. For, like the Armenian priests, he was married; and he informed us, also, that in the time of their fasts and festivals, his flock, for the sake of peace, observe the Armenian calendar, though they are allowed to eat fish in lent.

We conversed with him at some length respecting the present state of his sect in these parts, and some of his statements are worth reporting. In the town of Moosh, and in the neighbouring villages of Norshén, Arinj, and Oghúnk, the papal Armenians amount, he assured us, to 150 families, and have one priest. The district of Alashgérd contains, besides those of his own village, 25 families in another named Khastor, and 10 in a third named Iritsoo-kegh. Khanoos formerly contained one village, and in Pásin there were some both at Hassan-kúlaah and Mejengérd, but they all retired with the Russian army to the Georgian provinces, and now there only remain in Pásin, 15 families at Khorasán, 12 at Aljakrák, and 10 at Bashkegh [Bash-köy]. Add to these the few that have assembled at Erzroom since its former papal Armenians left with the Russians, and you have a list of all the adherents of that sect in this part of Turkish Armenia, of whose existence he was aware, and of whom we were able to hear from other sources.



They were formerly well supplied with priests; but when the papal Armenians were driven from Constantinople, all, to the number of nearly 50, he thought, were sought out and banished; so that now, with the exception of himself and another in Moosh, there is not to be found a papal priest of any kind out of Erzroom. No ecclesiastics of European birth or education nearer than Khósrova and Constantinople were known to him, nor could we hear of any bishop of his sect nearer than the latter city. He escaped the persecution himself by temporarily absconding, and is now left with the care of three villages, in which he officiates alternately. Neither of them has any school. The privileges recently granted to his sect in Turkey, gave him no little pleasure; and he related with much satisfaction, an attempt he had just made to retaliate upon the Armenians for their intolerance. Three or four families of them remain in his village; and he had petitioned the pashá of Bayezeed when he passed by a day or two before, to compel them to become papists or to leave the village, pretending that it was impossible for the two sects to live together. The Kürdish chief seems to have had a better sense of justice than the Christian priest, for he gave him no encouragement.—Nearly all the Armenians of this vicinity left with the Russians; and our host affirmed, that they were urged and almost forced into the measure. His own flock went as far as Toprák-kúlaah. While they were absent the moslems burnt their church.

You have only to add the papal Armenian congregations at Tiflís, Gori, and Kotais, and a small number at Akhaltsikhe to those above enumerated, to complete the list of the few professed papists that we heard of among the Armenians to the east of Tokát and Trebizond. But how far are the Armenians themselves from papacy? That their church partakes largely of the spirit and doctrines of the Romish religion, and in most of its leading corruptions as well as in many minute ceremonies does not essentially differ from it, you cannot have failed to perceive in the course of our narrative. And the interesting question may have suggested itself—from whence came such numerous resemblances between churches so long separated? The answer, I apprehend, is neither difficult nor unsatisfactory.

The slightest acquaintance with ecclesiastical history may convince one, that, before the commencement of the fourth century, Christianity had extensively degenerated from its original purity as



a religion of the heart, into a mere profession of theoretical dogmas and the observance of external rites. Such, it is natural to suspect, was the form of it to which the Armenians were at that period converted, and the circumstances of the event, if national tradition has correctly preserved them, confirm the suspicion that they have from the beginning known extremely little of the true conversion of the heart. We are told that immediately upon king Durtád's embracing the faith, the nation followed his example in a body, and were baptized. To say nothing of the doubtfulness of all national conversions, the very hastiness of this proceeding, by allowing no time for competent instruction, shews that the Armenians could not have been enlightened converts; the fact that the Scriptures were not translated into their language until a century afterward, is an additional indication of the scantiness of their religious knowledge; and the confessed backsliding of many of the nobility into the most scandalous immoralities and the blackest crimes, even during the lifetime of Durtád, proves how superficial was their conversion.\*

Thus the Armenian church was a soil well adapted to the rapid growth of all the corruptions which from that time sprung up in such speedy succession in different parts of the Christian world. Even those which then existed, were, it would seem, not sparingly introduced by St. Gregory. For, by the immediate consecration of four hundred bishops and a countless number of priests, he betrayed a disposition to multiply an idle and unqualified priesthood; and by the construction of convents and nunneries, and spending the last of his days in a solitary cave, he shewed that he was ready to foster the monastic spirit of his age.† So deeply indeed was the taste for monkhood implanted, that his fifth successor is said to have built two thousand convents.‡

Of the rites and dogmas subsequently adopted by other bodies of Christians, there was a free importation, for the two centuries that the Armenians formed a regular branch of the general church. A special messenger was sent to Jerusalem for the ceremonies observed in that church, and brought thence eight canons regulating the sacraments and other rites. For a similar object, a correspondence was carried on with the bishop of Nisibis.§ One Ca-

\* Mos. Chor. lib. 2, c. 89. St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 11. Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 15.

† Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 15.

‡ Avdall's translation of Chamcheán, vol. 1, p. 182. See also Mos. Chor. lib. 2, p. 88.

§ Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 15.



tholicos, who had been educated at Constantinople in the influence of all the secular ideas and regulations introduced into the church under the patronage of Constantine and his successors, brought from thence "various observances, which, like precious stones, he inlaid into the old."\* And several who followed him distinguished themselves by their *improvements* in the services and laws of the church.† So that when, by rejecting the council of Chalcedon in A.D. 491, the Armenians cut themselves off from the communion of the great body of Christians, they were doubtless in possession of all the legendary dogmas and observances which had then been adopted by the Christian world.

The infection of monophysitism suspended indeed this freedom of intercourse between the Armenians and their Christian brethren, and the arrogant efforts of the Greeks, while their empire lasted, to effect a reconciliation, served to widen the breach, and attach them more obstinately to some peculiar doctrines and practices. But the specification of their refusal to acknowledge the council of Chalcedon, to put water in the wine and leaven in the bread of the eucharist, to celebrate the nativity of Christ on the 25th of December, to eat fish, oil, wine, eggs, or butter in their fasts, and to commune on Holy Thursday, as the points at issue‡, shews that in other respects they either did not differ from their Greek neighbours, or were willing to conform to them. Nor can it be considered improbable, that every one of the temporary reconciliations that repeatedly occurred, left behind it, amidst an accumulation of irritated feeling, some new item of conformity to the Greek church, especially as more than one of the Armenian Catholicoses decidedly favoured the contemplated union. The last of these was Nerses Shnorháli, to this day one of the highest authorities in the church; who, by exerting all his great influence for this object, laid matters in such a train, that after his death (A.D. 1173) it was temporarily effected with the general consent of the nation.§ The Greek emperors, too, instead of always driving, sometimes allured to a union, and their allurements, such as a present of a piece of the true cross, bits of the crown of thorns, the sponge and the nails used at the crucifixion, and remnants of the Saviour's swaddling clothes, and of his mother's apron, were means of corruption.|| The Arme-

\* Chamcheán, p. 3, c. 18.

† Ibid. p. 4, c. 18.

|| Ibid. p. 5, c. 1, 7.

† Ibid. p. 3, c. 25; p. 4, c. 1, 4.

§ Ibid. p. 6, c. 7.



nians had, indeed, centuries before, begun to venerate relics\* ; but such imperial gifts doubtless strengthened the superstition. 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500

The intercourse of the Armenians with the *Romish* church commenced at the period of the Crusades. It was, from the beginning, of a more friendly, and therefore of a more corrupting character than that with the Greeks; and there are doubtless good grounds for La Croze's suggestion, that very many of the peculiar resemblances between the Armenian and the papal churches, sprung from *Romish* influence and intrigues in the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.† The acquaintance was introduced by a personal visit of the first Catholicos, who resided in Cilicia, to Rome, in A.D. 1075. The third from him, after holding two consultations upon the most friendly terms with a papal nuncio at Antioch and Jerusalem, received a staff of office from the pope‡; and all his successors, who, to the sixth generation, were of the same family, continued the acquaintance, until in A.D. 1197, a formal union was concluded between the two churches.

The object of that measure was to obtain the concurrence of the pope in the coronation of Leo, the Armenian king; it was acceded to by the Catholicos, and twelve bishops swore to abide by it. The same Leo within a few years indeed quarrelled with the Latins, and drove them all, clergy and laity, from his dominions. But by marrying a daughter of the king of Cyprus, he led the way to intermarriages with Europeans, and introduced papacy permanently into the reigning family. In consequence of which, his successors were ever firm partisans of the *Romish* church, and some exerted their influence, even to persecution, to induce their subjects to conform in all things to its rites and doctrines. In these circumstances, it is expressly recorded that extreme unction was successfully introduced in A.D. 1243; and doubtless a multitude of innovations accompanied it.§

I need not review the intercourse of the Armenians and the papists since the destruction of the kingdom of Cilicia. Merely add to the preceding statements, the fact that it has been continued by means of papal missionaries down to the present time, with so much success, if we may believe their reports, that not a small number of Catholicoses have sent in their submission to the pope;

\* Chamcheán, p. 4, c. 12, 17.

† Chamcheán, p. 5, c. 17, p. 6, c. 4.

‡ Histoire du Christianisme d'Armenie.

§ Ibid. p. 6, c. 10; 11, 12, 15.



and you will have a satisfactory account of the origin of the resemblances that exist between the two churches.

*April 20.* The sudorific effects of our vapour bath last night, made the pure mountain air doubly inspiriting, as we mounted our horses at 5 o'clock this morning. Our exhilarated spirits, however, were soon damped by the prospects of the day. We had before us a ride of six hours over the mountain mentioned yesterday. It was the highest we crossed in any part of our journey, and rose up against the horizon like an immense barrier of eternal snow. A caravan at Mollah Soleimán had informed us, that the difficulty of the passage had obliged them to sleep several nights upon its summit; and our repeated inquiries of those we now passed, were answered by some, that it was, and by others, that it was not practicable. The mud at the bottom of our narrow foot-path, soon gave place to snow still deeper and softer, and of course more fatiguing to our animals; and a storm of rain and melting snow continually increased the difficulty.

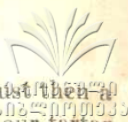
So gradual was the rise at first, however, that no serious impediment detained us till we had advanced far beyond the last village. Then, at the first steep ascent, our baggage horses, and the one that I rode, failed through weakness, and fell. The whole mountain before us consisted of ridges, and valleys, and abrupt declivities, made doubly difficult by the depth of the melting snow; and in some places, immense drifts having, during the winter, transformed valleys into plains, the caravans had neglected the old and struck out new paths, and the only beaten track conducted us across filled-up abysses of unknown depth. In such a road, few rods were passed without some of our miserable beasts sinking beyond their power of recovery. As often as one fell, he was unladen, raised, and laden again; my own I led up every ascent, and even thus could with difficulty get him forward. Once he sunk into a hole so deep, that the narrowness of the path alone arrested his body, and perhaps prevented him from entirely disappearing; for there was apparently a small lake under the snow, and his feet rested upon nothing. Had he had strength, in such a position it would have been useless; his owner, our muleteer, seemed as helpless as he, and stood aghast, crying, *Wai! wai! ojaghum batdy!* (literally) alas! alas! my hearth is sunk! Antonio was thrown into contortions of despair by getting his feet wet; and altogether, serious as our situation really was, our party presented, for a



moment, a comic scene. We at length drew the poor animal out by his halter, without any more effort on his part than if he had been dead.

Difficulties increased as we advanced. Our baggage horses fell, and had to be unloaded and loaded again at almost every step. The storm, becoming a tempest, wetted and chilled us. Our worthless tartar disappeared to seek his own comfort in the nearest village, and left us to find the way over the mountains as best we could. An old Kùrd, who had joined our party in the morning, and remained to help us as long as he dare, now hastened away to seek shelter in some inhabited spot for the night. He promised indeed to send us assistance from the nearest village; but how far it was we knew not, nor whether he would think of us again. The day was evidently drawing to a close; and the prospect began to stare us in the face, of passing a tempestuous night on the mountains, without food or shelter, and with the snow for our bed. As a last expedient, the bags that contained our most valuable articles were put upon our own beasts, and we led them forward to find a village, if possible, and send assistance to the muleteer and servant, who remained with the other animals and the rest of our effects. We had not yet reached the highest part of the mountain; the road we were unacquainted with, and it was beginning to be hidden by the newly fallen snow; the wind had acquired almost the violence of a hurricane, and drove the damp snow and sleet against us with such impetuosity as thoroughly to drench our clothes; their weight, as our jaded horses obliged us to walk almost every step, impeded our progress; and all our remaining strength was repeatedly called for to reload the bags, which were repeatedly thrown off in our struggles to master the snow-drifts. As this accident happened once in an exposed situation, a dense dark cloud enveloped us, and a blast so piercing accompanied it, that it seemed to penetrate to the heart. An indescribable sensation of horror came over me, and my companion was completely bewildered.

The clouds at length broke away for a moment, as we reached a lofty summit, and shewed us that we were at the top. Far down an unbroken and steep descent, appeared the dark sides of naked hills, stripped of their wintry covering by a southern exposure to the rays of the sun. We dragged our horses, with all the speed that our strength and weight could give us, to the bottom; and then, stumbling as we could, over snow drifts and through mud,



were at last cheered by a view of human habitations. Just then a single horseman, sent (whether by the old Kürd or by our tartar at this late hour, we never learned) to bring up our party, met us. No remonstrances, however, would induce him to go on to the succour of those we had left behind, and he returned with us. The village we had found was inhabited by Kürds, and called Dáhar: we entered it at sunset, having spent thirteen hours in riding six.

Our tartar we found seated by a fire in a spacious stable, comfortably smoking his pipe with the aga of the village. His first words, instead of expressing sympathy for us, or care for those who were still on the mountain, were a bitter complaint of his own hardship, in having had his clothes wet through in one or two spots on his shoulders! Had we yielded to the feelings of the moment, we could have given him a sound flagellation with an instrument more efficient than the tongue; but a word from the aga, bespeaking our sympathy for the tartar, convinced us that there was an understanding between them, and that, would we obtain any favours, we must keep in the good graces of both. Nor were we left to infer that the favours we needed could be obtained by merely bridling our tongues. For the old aga, beginning immediately to tell what an asylum was his village, created here by God on purpose for the benighted traveller, and how he, a favourite servant of the pashá, was stationed in it specially to save all who are exposed to perish on the mountains, added, that it was understood, of course, that such services were rendered *for money!* Making a virtue of necessity, therefore, we held our peace, and engaged him to send out four men on foot, all Kürds like himself, to bring up what we had left, promising them such a reward as he suggested, when their work was done.

About 9 o'clock our muleteer and servant arrived in a tremendous shower, having forsaken the baggage and one horse near where we had left them. The servant, an Armenian who had hardly been out of Tebriz in his life, before he entered our employ, being thoroughly drenched with the rain, completely exhausted by fatigue, and stiffened with cold, fell helpless upon the ground as he entered. To our repeated inquiry, what he would have, his only reply was, *Sahib öldüm! öldüm sahib!* Master I am dead! I am dead, master! Our unfeeling host, as if interpreting his wishes, tauntingly cried, "He wants a priest!" (meaning, to give him the



viaticum before he should die.) No one would raise a finger to his aid, and we begged in vain for the least article of dry clothing, for food, and even for a fire, to revive him. The old Kùrd only laughed at our solicitude, as if the life of a Christian dog was not worth saving; and at the same moment took off his own shalwár for the muleteer, a Kùrd as hardy as the beasts he drove, saying complacently to the tartar, that for the act God would reckon him worthy of a reward! He soon went off to bed, refusing to give us even a bit of bread for the sufferer; and a hard morsel, contributed by a more compassionate camel-driver who lodged with us, was the only nutriment we could procure him. A servant of the house tardily consented, for a reward, to break off a few sticks from the terrace for a fire; and our own cloaks, which were not quite so wet as his, contributed to revive him.

About 11 o'clock at night, the men whom we had sent for our baggage returned without it, declaring that so violent was the tempest they could not possibly reach it. Our lives were now all saved, however, and we lay down with a light heart, blessing God who had so mercifully preserved us. The storm, doubtless, increased the difficulty of the passage of the mountain to-day; but two English friends who crossed it a few days later, in fair weather, were obliged to spread carpets upon the snow for long distances, to enable their horses to pass. We were assured, that for one or two months in the year the snow entirely disappears, and then it is passable with carts. From the multitude of abrupt ravines and ridges of which it is here composed, it has received the name of *Gedük-dagh*, or fissure mountain.

*April 21.* Our first care in the morning was to secure what remained of our baggage upon the mountains; if indeed any remained; for some passing Kùrd, or even the inhabitants of this village, who all knew of our misfortune, might have anticipated us, and pilfered every article. No one would move, till those who had been sent last evening had received their reward, notwithstanding they had forfeited it by failing in their attempt. Then, as the morning sun shone out upon the snowy mountains, five or six started, and skipping over them with the nimbleness of deer, in due time returned with all our effects, except two or three articles of slight value. The poor muleteer sustained the heaviest loss, for the horse he had left was found lifeless. The accident detained us the whole day; for it made us completely dependant upon the inhabitants of the



village for another animal, and all were so disposed to take advantage of our necessity, that night came on before one could be procured upon tolerable terms.

Our situation in the mean time was not the most agreeable. The old Kùrdish aga, our host, laid himself out indeed to be uncommonly accommodating. By rescuing our baggage from becoming a prey to the thievish propensities of his nation on the mountain, he had imposed upon us a real obligation; and now he took constant precautions that none of our effects should be pilfered by his townsmen, who thronged us the whole day. But every favour was conferred with an affected condescension, intended to shew how much it cost an orthodox mussulman to pay attentions to a Christian and a Frank; and with a studious exhibition of difficulties in the way of gratifying us, designed to magnify our estimation of the slightest benefits; and all for the purpose of increasing the *pesh-késh*, which was expected from us in return. All his pretended efforts, however, procured us little to eat besides his favourite pastoral dish. It was *yoghoort* (curdled milk) mixed with water, and thickened with black bread rubbed into crumbs between his hands, differing neither in its ingredients nor appearance from the dish served out to certain domestic animals from our farmer's kitchens, under the more familiar name of *swill*. For one meal a few eggs were procured; but the request for more was repeated in vain, and we were wondered at for supposing that they, like a Christian village, had fowls and eggs. Aga, or lord, of the village as he was, hardly an article of our dress or baggage met his eye, without eliciting an intimation, that it would be a most acceptable memento of our acquaintance. Penknives, and even old spoons did not escape, and a polite request was preferred from his harem for a taste of our sugar. But his cupidity was most attracted by an old cotton shawl that I had long worn for a sash. We laughed at him for begging it, when he had already a good silk one of Tripoli manufacture wound around his head for a turban. His reply was, that his religion forbade him to pray in a garment entirely of silk, and he wished, therefore, at the hours of devotion, to substitute a cotton turban, to give acceptableness to his prayers! To his credit I would add, that if he took great liberties in begging, he allowed us as great in refusing, and was finally satisfied with certainly a moderate present.

Dáhar is the last village in the pashalik of Bayezeed, and in it



we saw the last of the Kürds. Many individuals of that nation wander indeed over the plains and hills beyond, and particularly was the country between Kars and Akhaltsikhe, formerly infested by them. But their proper country, Kürdistan, can hardly be considered as extending to the west of this mountain. To the east of it, the moslem population is as universally and distinctly of the Kürdish race, as that of Asia Minor is of the Turkish. The fact is proved, not only by their manners and character, but by their language. All are able to converse in Turkish, and generally in Armenian also; but thus far from the Persian frontier the *vernacular* language of all the Mohammedans we met, is Kürdish, and so universal is its use, that it is familiar also to every Christian. Our tartar, besides conversing fluently in Turkish and Armenian, in addition to his native Kürdish, pretended to know the language of a distinct tribe of about 600 families in the vicinity of Moosh, called Zuzijies. We have no evidence of the existence of such a people, besides his assertion and that of the officer of the pashá whom we met at Uch-keleesch. Both affirmed that they are sünný moslems.

*April 22.* We left Dahár at 6 A.M. to complete our descent of the mountain. Stern tempestuous winter still reigned on the heights above, and sprinkled us with some flakes of a snow-squall, as we started; but ere we reached the bottom his snows had disappeared, and the earth was smiling with the aspect of early spring. The change of climate was more sudden than I had ever experienced, and seemed entirely disproportioned to the change of elevation. We threaded in our descent an irregular tortuous ravine, in company with a dashing torrent; and with it were finally ushered into the open province of Pásin, through the Kara-derbénd, a remarkable pass between enormous buttresses of perpendicular rocks. They seemed like nature's outposts, to warn against too close an inspection of her mysteries on the mountain above. The country beyond presented a surface of gentle undulations and swelling hills, and was covered with a soil uncultivated indeed, but almost without exception arable, apparently fertile, and admirably adapted to the growth of grain. Dely-baba, an Armenian village of some consequence, reckoned four hours from Dáhar, appeared not far to the right of us at 11 A.M. Afterward the large village of Khorasán was seen at a distance also on the right across the Aras. At 3 P.M. we passed through a small Armenian hamlet;



and at four stopped for the night at Kamatsór, nine hours from Dáhar.

We had intended to reach Amra-köy, an hour farther; but the tartar urged, that, it being a moslem village, not so good accommodations could be procured as here among the Armenians; and the muleteer, with curses upon the aga of Dáhar for his inhospitality, repeated his favourite proverb, *Giaoor evy babám evy*, the infidel's house is my father's house, to indicate his desire of lodging with Christians. The hospitable intentions expressed in the honest face of an old Armenian, who presented himself as our host, silenced our complaints; and a stable room furnished with clean mattresses and cushions for our convenience, satisfied us with the arrangement. Dinner was soon served up in a neater and better style than we had seen among any peasants since we were in this vicinity before; a capacious copper tray being placed upon a regular pedestal, and loaded with various provisions, each in a neat copper plate. In a word, the general appearance of things, and deportment of the people, which ten months before had seemed so deeply tinged with barbarism, being now contrasted with what we had since seen, made us feel that we were treading again upon the borders of civilization.—Our host said that his village formerly contained 45 Armenian families, but only 15 remain since the war. He estimated the number of his nation that are left in the whole of Pásin, at five or six hundred families.

*April 23.* Determined to reach Erzroom to-day, though 11 hours distant, we started at 3 A.M. But so slow was the progress of our miserable animals, that we were until half-past 6 in reaching the Aras, a distance of only two hours. We crossed it by the Shepherd's Bridge, which has been already described, and came upon the road we had travelled on our way from Erzroom to Kars.

Just beyond Hassau-kúlaah an accident detained us till it was evident that we could not all reach the city before night, and I was sent forward with the tartar to engage lodgings, leaving Mr. Dwight to bring up the baggage. We separated in fair weather, but a shower of rain soon commenced, which quickly changed to a violent snow storm, and continued until night. The snow of winter was still deep upon the ridge that separates the plain of Hassan-kúlaah from Erzroom, and some banks of it were even lying in the streets of the city itself. We arrived at sunset; the storm detained Mr. Dwight until the following morning.



Erzroom, which we had regarded as so uninviting at our former visit, when now viewed from the side of Persia, seemed like another city. Its edifices of stone, though few were of two stories, looked solid and spacious: the pavements of its streets, though made of rocks, had an aspect of neatness; and the windows of its houses open to the streets, though closely latticed, appeared quite European. It still appeared desolate; its bazárs were nearly deserted, and no trade seemed to flourish. Of all its former Christian population, there remained only 120 Armenian and 48 papal Armenian families, the latter having recently moved in from other places; of its former 6600 shops, 3000 were now shut; and six tanneries were the only manufactories it contained. During the eight days of our delay we were hospitably lodged by Mr. Zohrab, a papal Armenian, who was acting as commercial agent for the English consul at Trebizond. There were two priests of his sect in town, and a fermán was daily expected for the completion of a church for them, which had been begun by Russian permission, but left unfinished when the army evacuated the city. No Armenian bishop had yet been substituted for the one who emigrated to the Russian territories.

An energetic pashá now commanded the city and pashalik, and, entering completely into the views of the Sultán, had introduced his new regulations and established order throughout the province. He treated us politely in a personal interview, and readily granted every facility for continuing our journey to Trebizond. Two English friends, with whom we had spent the winter at Tebriz, and who arrived while we were here, received his more particular attentions. One of them having been recommended to him as a brother-in-law of the acting ambassador in Persia, he was pleased to consider him as his guest, and accordingly sent him rations of a sheep, a basket of rice, a tub of butter, and other common articles of Turkish diet. An officer was also commanded to accompany him to the principal mosques and other curiosities of the city. Being ourselves in the same house with him, his politeness allowed us to share in the favours that were designed for himself and his companion.

The most interesting circumstance of our visit to the mosques, was the fact, that, in a place formerly noted for being among the most bigoted in Turkey, five Europeans were allowed quietly to



enter and examine, in the most public manner, three of the principal places of moslem worship. The *imáms*, as the *sünnies* call their priests, were very polite to us, and not only on this occasion, but so long as we were in the city, were we treated by the people generally with every respect. The mosques contained nothing to be observed, except the usual profusion of sentences from the Korán inscribed in gilded letters upon their walls, and ugly chandeliers composed of glass cut lamps and tasseled ostrich egg-shells. Only one, the *Ooloo jami*, which measured 66 paces by 41, was remarkable for size, and that was gloomy, and destitute of beauty or grandeur.

Of the other curiosities, the most worthy of notice was the *Chifteh mináreh*, or pair of minarets. It is a ruined edifice, covering nearly as much ground as the mosque just mentioned, and not far from it in the north-east corner of the citadel. We were unable to learn its exact date or object, but its antiquity is evidently considerable. A double-headed eagle on one of its door posts seems to refer it to the times of the Grecian empire; but two fluted minarets, from which it derives its present name, rising on each side, shew it to have been used for moslem worship; and a profusion of blue glazing, which ornaments them and the doorway, betrays a Persian origin, and reminded us of the towers of Shamkór and Salmás. Its roof has disappeared. Along either side within, an arched corridor shades the doors of a series of small apartments, which may have been the cells of either Christian monks or moslem devotees. Its farther extremity is occupied by a cylindrical structure, perhaps twenty feet in diameter by forty in height, capped with an acute cone in the style of the domes on many old Armenian churches, and lined throughout with Marágha alabaster. It might be taken for the sanctuary of a church, except that no crosses appear upon its walls, while its position in the southern instead of the eastern part of the building intimates rather that it may have been the kiblah of a mosque, and its form, being like that of three monumental structures just without the walls of the citadel, suggests that it may cover the remains of some departed saint or hero. Local tradition ascribes those, we were told when we examined them at our former visit, to Sultán Mulook, a name which seems to have some connection with the Seljookian dynasty. But in answer to our inquiries now, for in-



formation from the same source respecting the origin of this building, our informants began to refer it to the daughters of Kai-kobád, and we ceased to question them.

Were it not for the desolation occasioned by the Russian war, you would doubtless be disposed seriously to consider the expediency of establishing a mission at Erzroom. But now, the small number of Armenians remaining in it and in the country around must be considered a decisive objection. We may be allowed to remind you, also, of the inhospitable nature of the country and climate as another obstacle, though without the former the latter ought not to be mentioned. But it will not always remain in its present state. We doubt not that an Armenian population will again assemble here, and then it may be made an important centre for missionary operations.

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## LETTER XXIV.

### FROM ERZROOM BY TREBIZOND TO MALTA.

Leave Erzroom—Want of wood in Armenia—Sheitán-deresy—Kara-koolák—State of the season at Chiftlik—Sanjaks of Erzroom—Read through Bailboort—Passage of a mountain in the night—Porodór—Accident in the mountains—Beautiful gardens in a valley—Gümish-kháneh—Dangerous passage of Khójah-deresy—Forest scenery—Poisonous honey—Formation of a natural bridge—Cultivation of maize—Secret professors of Christianity—Reach Trebizond—Its history—Description of it—Its trade—Population—Greek and Armenian moslems—The Laz—Proposed mission at Trebizond—Voyage to Constantinople—Return to Malta—Concluding observations.

DEAR SIR,

THE line of posts to the westward of Erzroom had been re-established since we were here before, and we availed ourselves of it to proceed to Trebizond. With a tartar to guide and protect us, we started at 3 and a quarter P.M. on the 2nd of May. Instead of fording the branch of the Euphrates a little below Uluja, as when we came from Constantinople, we continued down its eastern side, sometimes on its bank and sometimes at a distance, through a hilly country, till within an hour of Ash-kulaah. Then, crossing



it by a bridge of stone, where it rushes between narrow banks of enormous rocks, we reached the post-house at Ash-kulaah an hour and a quarter after midnight, having made nine hours from the city. Our road from Uluja had not passed a single inhabited house, and here were only a few moslem huts. Its former Armenian inhabitants had emigrated with the Russians, and nothing but dilapidated subterraneous walls remained to mark their abodes.

*May 3.* We started at 7 and a half A.M. to make a stage of 16 hours, without an intervening village or an inhabited house, by nearly the same road which we had travelled on a former occasion. For twelve hours, to Sheitán-deresy, nothing was noticed worth recording, in addition to our observations when we came, except that the few stunted cedars on the mountain sides, which then appeared so diminutive, now seemed of a respectable size, and were a most welcome sight to the eye that for months had seen not a single uncultivated tree. All the way from Tebriz, a distance of more than 300 miles in a westerly direction, and nearly the whole breadth of Armenia, we had found no forest trees, except the little cluster of pines at the Shepherd's Bridge; nor indeed hardly a wild bush, except in one small spot near the Murád-chai!

The gloomy dell just mentioned seemed now even more appropriately named than when we passed it before, and as we issued from it in safety, our tartar's countenance brightened, and he thanked God that Sheitán-deresy was crossed before night overtook us. The effect of the Russian invasion in quelling robbery seemed still to be felt, however, and it was well known that no accident had occurred here since that event. But many are the places in Turkey, which, having once got a bad name, long retain it, and are habitually dreaded for years after they have ceased to be the resort of robbers; and probably years of security will not efface from this frightful dell its character as a rendezvous for the sons of violence. Reaching Kara-koolák at 8 and a half P.M., our tartar introduced us to an Armenian post-house for the night, recommending its keeper to us by saying, that he also was a *chórbajy* (soup-maker).

*May 4.* We passed at an early hour over the woodless mountains of Otlúk-bely, now spotted with numerous and deep banks of snow, into the extensive plain of Lori. It was more cultivated than when we saw it before, as was also the whole country from



Ash-kúlaah to Chiftlík. We observed no crops but grain descending from the next ridge into a deep wooded glen, the infant river of Niksár conducted us by many a winding into the plain of Kerkid-chiftlík. The garden trees around it were just putting forth their young foliage. The almond had blossomed at Tebriz the last of March, but here, for the first time in Turkish Armenia, did we observe any leaves beginning to appear. We found our post-house at Gémery after dark.

*May 5.* When passing here before, we understood that this sanják, and the one to the west of it, belonged to the pashalik of Erzroom. Now we are assured that Chiftlík is subject to the pashá of Gümish-kháneh. Then, also, the sanjáks of Erzroom were said to be twelve; when last at Erzroom we were informed that they are but nine.\* Probably Chiftlík and Sheherán had in the mean time been set off to Gümish-kháneh, as its pashá is now subject to that of Erzroom.

The horses of the post being otherwise employed in the morning, we were detained until 4 P.M. for the menziljy to collect our complement from the neighbouring villages. Starting at that hour, we turned to the right toward the mountains of Gümish-kháneh, from the road to Constantinople, which we had followed thus far. It had been our wish not to come on that road at all, but to take another, ten or twelve hours shorter, through Baiboort, a place of ancient Armenia, containing about 1000 Turkish and (since the war) 60 Armenian families. The want of post-horses upon it prevented. Our English friends took that direction, and encountered a snowy mountain between Erzroom and Baiboort (probably a continuation of Otlúk-bely) yielding nothing in difficulty to Gedük-dagh. They were obliged again to carpet the melting snow for some distance, and passed a night upon it in the open air.

Just where we entered the mountains, perhaps an hour from Gémery, a little hamlet occupied a sunny nook, and charmed us by its green parterres and smiling gardens. Thence we followed up a craggy glen, by means of a decent carriage road, the origin of which we knew not whether to attribute to the Russians, who

\* Eleven of the twelve sanjáks mentioned to us first, were Sheherán, Erzengán, Chiftlík, Terján, Baiboort, Ispír, Tortoom, Upper Pásin, Lower Pásin, Khanoos, and Erzroom; the name of the twelfth we did not learn.—Our last informant, a young man in the service of the collector of taxes, added, that in the nine sanjáks now composing the pashalik, there are 3800 villages.



made here an abortive attempt to penetrate to Gümish-khaneh to the peasants, who draw their timber from the mountains upon it with their carts. Two hours from Gémery was another considerable village, and beyond, the mountains began to exhibit pines of some size and a variety of smaller trees. At length the road ceased, and we improved the last rays of twilight in clambering up a rough and tedious glen, which led us to the top of a mountain ridge exceedingly narrow and sharp. In the darkness of night, the almost precipitous descent beyond seemed to lead into a bottomless abyss. Most of the company dismounted, but considering my horse surer-footed than myself, I kept my seat. How our süriyj traced the path, or whether he actually did, we knew not, for so intense was the darkness that no path appeared. However, aided not a little by our specific gravity, we made our way rapidly downward, over rocks and stones, without accident to any one.

Proceeding thus for an hour or two, though not always with so rapid a descent, we often wished for daylight to disclose to us the wildness of the spot, which the darkness of night now prevented us from seeing and describing. At 9 P.M., six hours from Gémery, we reached the village of Porodór, and were first warned of the fact, by finding ourselves on the top of a house! After stumbling awhile over the terraces, we obtained lodgings for the two or three hours we intended to stop. No *straw*, the usual provender, could be obtained for our horses, and after wrangling long with our host, the süriyj, as a last resort, accepted of some *hay*!

*May 6.* We were awake again at 1 o'clock, and started at half-past 3 A.M. Objects were but dimly discernible in the light of the moon and of the early dawn; and our stupid süriyj, instead of pursuing the level bed of a small river along which we travelled, led us by a goat's path up the steep face of a mountain which formed one of its banks. The track was too narrow to afford a firm footing to the loaded horses, and they both lost their balance. One tumbled over and over into the middle of the stream below; the other, though tied to him as usual by the tail, in some way extricated himself, and continuing upright, landed upon his feet. The first also soon recovered himself, but his load, consisting of our most valuable clothing and books, had turned, and the bag that was lowest became thoroughly soaked before he could be got out of the water. This stream was limpid and pure, but a similar



accident had on a former occasion plunged the same bag in a warm mineral mud-puddle. The affair caused the süriyj to smart under the tartar's lash, and detained us about an hour.

We had two mountain ridges to cross during the morning, neither of them inferior to the one of last night. The passage in both cases was effected by ascending a ravine on one side, and descending another on the opposite. Between them was some cultivation, but no village appeared. Their sides were rather sparingly covered with trees, and on one were a few firs. They presented the boldest features of mountain scenery, but notwithstanding their height, and near connection with the Giaoor-dagh to the west, very little snow lay upon them. The last ravine, by a long and nearly a straight course, brought us suddenly upon the banks of a large stream, now swollen above its banks and running to the left. It shewed us that we had unawares already begun our descent toward the Black Sea, from the elevated regions over which we had so long travelled, and accounted for the novel sight of villages with fruit gardens around them, which had attracted our notice in the ravine from which we now issued.

The narrow valley of the river, at the point where we entered it, seemed almost a paradise. The naked rocks of the cliffs that enclosed it concentrated the rays of the sun to a degree which might in time have become oppressive, but the first feeling of which to us, recently from such chilly regions, was like a sudden transfer from a bleak November atmosphere to a smiling morning in May. Along the banks of the stream was a continued series of fruit gardens, crowded with a luxuriant growth of cherry, apple, pear, walnut, peach, mulberry, and other trees, now covered with blossoms which filled the air with their odour. Among them were scattered numerous country-houses, to which their owners are attracted in winter by the mildness of the climate of this charming valley. We were now upon the high road from Erzroom through Baiboort to Trebizond, and every mile or two brought us to a *khan* or shop, where provender, butter and cheese, bread and fruit, were exposed for sale. The bread was indeed coarse and black, but it was in regular loaves, such as we had not seen for many a month, and the sight and taste of well preserved apples on the 6th of May was delicious. Every vestige of inhospitable Armenia and Persia was gone. They offer to the passing traveller no such conveniences as these, humble as they were.



Gümish-khâneh is on the left of the river, about an hour and a quarter below where we first came upon it, and not in sight of the direct road. Leaving the margin of the stream, you climb the mountain by a good path for half an hour, and find its houses near the top, rising one above another along the sides of a ravine, which just below sends out on either hand remarkable projections of perpendicular rock. They seemed to be nature's provision for its defence, but man had not availed himself of them, and not a gun nor a battlement appeared. We reached the town at a quarter before 11 A.M., having come a distance of 6 hours from Porodór. Our observations at Gümish-khâneh were necessarily limited; for, arriving hungry and sleepy, and in haste to proceed, we were obliged to improve the few hours of our delay in eating and sleeping. I have already informed you, that it is governed, as well as the province of which it is the capital, by a pashá of two tails, who is subject to the pashá of Erzroom. Some Armenians of the place had told us at Chiftlik, that its population consists of 200 Greek, 200 Turkish, and 500 Armenian houses; and a papal Armenian of Trebizond had assured us at Erzroom, that out of 2000 houses which occupy it, 500 are Greek, 70 Armenian, from 5 to 10 papal Armenian, and the rest Turkish.

We obtained no information here to reconcile these discrepancies; except that in passing through the bazárs, hardly any moslems appeared, and we therefore judged that the Christians far outnumber them. We were informed, too, that the Greeks are much the most numerous class of Christians, and have five churches with a bishop of their own; while the Armenians have but one church, and are subject to the bishop of Trebizond. The pashalik, likewise, is said to be full of Greeks; and perhaps for this reason the high mountain in it, which has been repeatedly mentioned by the name of *Giaoor-dagh*, received that appellation, which means *infidel mountain*. In the ravine near the town is the celebrated silver mine, which has given to it its name of *Gümish-khâneh*, or place of silver. Specimens of solid ore were given us, but we afterward understood, that a dust or sand is procured which is richer. It contains lead and silver, but the proportion of the latter is so small as hardly to pay for refining. Copper mines are found elsewhere, at a distance from the town.—The Russians remained here too short a time to leave many permanent traces, or to take away many of the Christian inhabitants.



We started again at a quarter before 2 P. M. and were soon upon the banks of the river. So long as the gardens continued, our ride was delightful. But at length the valley became too narrow for them, and the perpendicular or impending cliffs of the two opposing mountains which formed it, approached so near each other, as to leave but just room for the river's channel. Our path at one time wound like a goat's track, over rocks high up the mountain side; and at another formed a narrow foothold along the margin of the water. The scenery was awfully grand beyond description. But fear often deprived me of the power of admiration, as my eye glanced to the bottom of the abyss, and shewed me how inevitably a stumble of my animal would plunge me into eternity in a moment, or caught a glimpse (as it did in one place) of the carcase of a horse, which, by a similar accident, had been precipitated downward, till it was arrested and suspended in mid air between two projecting crags. To travel such a road in the dark was not to be thought of, and so we stopped for the night at a khan, 5 hours from town.

*May 7.* The distance from Gümish-kháneh to Trebizond is 24 hours. Of course 19 remained to be travelled, and that too with the same horses, for there is no post-house on the road. To accomplish the whole with our baggage, by daylight, was evidently impossible; and still we deemed it highly important to reach Trebizond to-night. It was therefore concluded to push forward ourselves, and leave Antonio to bring up the baggage as he could. We started at 4 A.M. and followed the river along the same sublime chasm, through dangers as constant, and with apprehension as much on the rack, as yesterday, for 3 hours. Then we left it, and traced to its source on the right, a tributary stream running through a ravine of precisely the same features. Surely never can we forget the sensations of awful grandeur, and of fearful anxiety, which impressed themselves upon our minds and nerves during the whole of our passage through the *Khójah-deresy*, or old man's valley, in the mountains of Pontus. It is nature's master-piece of sublimity; or rather, an unequalled exhibition of the power and economy of God: a mass of the eternal mountains cleft in twain, to drain off the waters that would otherwise collect in their bosom! a canal worthy of the omnipotent hand that formed it! Few places occurred, for a distance of six or seven hours, that we were



not tracing a narrow path along the face of precipices, where a false step might precipitate one a fearful depth, and plunge him a mangled corpse in the foaming stream.

Such was the effect upon my nerves (then, doubtless, somewhat weakened by illness and fatigue), that I believe it would have been impossible for me immediately afterward to have travelled in the night, as we had often done during our journey, trusting implicitly to the guidance of a *sürüjy*, and the carefulness of our horses. But we judge of every thing by comparison. The natives of these mountains invariably spoke of it as a good road. And very likely I should myself have formed a better opinion, and given a less frightful picture of it, had I never backed any but a strong and sure-footed horse. Thus far from Erzroom we had not performed a single stage without some of our animals giving out, stumbling, falling, and lying down, and I could not quiet the apprehension, that these were any moment liable to a similar accident.—This was the winter road to Trebizond. Another strikes off across the mountains a little this side of *Gümish-kháneh*, and is five or six hours nearer; but it was not yet opened by reason of the snow. That it is not much safer, may be inferred from the fact, that our tartar having taken it on his return, his horse, a good strong beast which he had purchased at Trebizond, slipped down a mountain and was killed.

We passed, this morning and yesterday, numerous companies of peasants, mostly Greeks, moving, as is their custom, from their winter residence in the valleys below, to their summer residence upon the mountains. They were generally dressed in the poorest clothing, and had almost no furniture. Three hours from the point where we left the large river, the ravine we followed conducted us, after a long and toilsome ascent, to the top of a sharp mountain ridge, on which some patches of snow were still lingering. We stretched our eyes to the north to discern the sea, as did Xenophon with his ten thousand, perhaps from this or from some neighbouring height. But, though we imagined that in one direction it ought to be seen, nothing except thin clouds appeared. Not a village was near our route; all the numerous khans we passed were already deserted, in anticipation that the other road would in a day or two draw away the travel from this; and having started without eating, we began to feel the calls of hunger. After a descent



of an hour or two from the ridge just mentioned, we were scantily supplied at a *derbënd*, occupied by a guard of miserable fellows with barley bread of the coarsest, dirtiest kind, and dried yoghoort.

Beyond, the mountainous sides of the ravine we descended, were covered, from the bottom to the top, with a thick and noble growth of forest trees; among which the beech stood pre-eminent for its stately height, and the elegance of its smooth tapering trunk. The grateful shade of the forest, the odour of flowering shrubs, the music of birds, and the murmuring of a torrent concealed in the bottom of the glen, combined to impress upon us almost as deep a sensation of the beautiful, as we had experienced of the sublime in the morning. Among the flowering shrubs, the blossom of the *azalea pontica* scented the whole atmosphere with its strong odour. From it doubtless, the bees obtained the honey which poisoned Xenophon's army. The same poisonous honey is common now in this district, producing, when eaten, headache, delirium, and vomiting. A stranger ate some by mistake, with all these effects, only a few days before we were at Trebizond. The natives detect it, we were told, by its being strongly scented with the blossom of the shrub just named. That shrub I have never noticed elsewhere. It exactly resembles the wild bush commonly called honeysuckle in New England, from which children in the spring are fond of gathering a watery excrement to eat, except that its blossom is yellow.

Ten hours from Trebizond the forest was succeeded by cultivation, and we soon crossed the stream just alluded to by a natural bridge, called by the natives, I believe, *Yer-köprüsy*, or earth bridge. It is remarkable for its formation. Just where the road strikes it, a mineral spring, with a copious ebullition of gas, discharges a small quantity of water, apparently the whole of which is turned to stone before it reaches three rods from its source. Similar appearances were also observed on the middle of the bridge, and the inquiry was immediately suggested, whether the bridge itself may not have been formed by such a process. Jumping from my horse, I descended so as to have a distinct view of its upper extremity. The same mineral fluid was dripping down its whole length, and had formed shapeless stalactites, which made up the nether arch, and reached almost or quite to the water's surface. The bridge extends some distance up and down the stream, and being covered with earth and vegetation, the traveller might easily



pass without noticing it. To confirm such a theory of its formation, another was observed not far below, in a forming state. A similar spring upon a high bank was discharging its water toward the river, and by continual deposits had extended a rock nearly half across the stream. In one part, a large mass had broken off by its unsupported weight, and fallen into the current. The water of the spring evidently goes on depositing its layer of stony matter as it descends the bank, until, reaching the water of the river, it is diluted by it, and the process ceases. Thus a constant passage is left open for the stream underneath, until the rock extends quite across, and rests upon the opposite bank.

The stream continued to flow on, as we proceeded, with the rapidity of a torrent descending from a mountain. Perpendicular ledges of rocks rose up from its narrow banks to a considerable height, and then a steep acclivity extended to the top of the mountain on either side. Neat bridges of a single stone arch, thrown over it every mile or two, facilitated communication between its two banks. Our path generally ran pretty high along the mountain above the precipices; and though now rough from bad weather, was made with some pains for Turkey. I could not yet divest my nerves of all misgiving, the effect of impressions received in the Khójah-deresy; and had we never seen that, we should probably have spoken of the sublimity of the scenery here. The slopes of the opposite mountains were extensively cultivated; and certainly never before did we dream that such steep declivities could be tilled. The inclination of some patches was not many degrees from vertical; many were evidently too precipitous for the plough to have been used, and must have been worked with hand instruments; and no where was a single spot terraced. It proved, in fact, that there was far from being so much exaggeration as we had supposed, in what a moslem fellow-traveller had previously told us—that the *Laz* cultivate mountains so nearly perpendicular, as to be able to stand to sow and reap, only by tying themselves to trees.

The crops we observed were grain and maize, in nearly equal quantities; the latter of which they were now planting. We observed much bread made from it in Trebizond, and it is known to be almost the only bread corn of Colchis. Some have supposed that maize was first found in America, and transplanted from thence. But the extent to which it is now cultivated far up the



Nile in Egypt, and the fact that so long ago as 1673, Chardin found it to be the principal food of the inhabitants of the retired regions of Colchis\*, may convince one that it cannot have been of exclusively American origin. Were an old Greek geographer reflecting upon this singular affinity between the productions of Egypt and Colchis, he would perhaps ascribe it to the invasion of Sesostris and his Colchian colony. America can much more fairly claim to have originated the *potato*. That vegetable is not found in the Levant, nor in any part of Western Asia, except within the immediate reach of European influence, and there only in small quantities.

The cultivators and inhabitants of this valley are not Laz, but of Greek descent. Some, I believe, still openly adhere to the Greek faith. But many have been professedly converted to Mohammedanism, and pass among moslems as followers of their prophet. But we were interested to learn from good authority, that their profession is a mere pretence. They practise neither circumcision nor any of the rites of the moslem religion. Secretly they are still attached to the Greek church, and have priests to perform for them its rites. Their names they take from the Old Testament as a common ground between moslems and Christians. Though inclined to the opinion, that sincerity even in a false faith is more favourable to the admission of truth, than hypocrisy or scepticism, I would still suggest, that the cord which thus binds this people to the forms of Christianity, may perhaps be advantageously seized by a missionary to attach them to its spirit. No villages appeared, and their light houses with shingled roofs were perched separately along the declivities of the mountains. We were informed that they are their winter residences, and are in summer entirely deserted. The numerous khans along the road, where they dispose of their produce to caravans and travellers, were already all closed.

At half-past 4 P.M. we reached the bottom of the mountain, at a cluster of houses called Jevizlık, 6 hours from Trebizond. It is the last spot in the pashalik of Gümish-kháneh; and was, I believe, the limit of the progress of the Russian arms toward Trebizond. Our süriyy, who, in fact, was the owner of our horses, and fearful that we should ride them too far, after trying every expedient, during the day, to retard our progress, now positively de-

\* Chardin, vol. 1, p. 161.



clared that we should go no farther. Our arguments had been already expended, and we told the tartar, that for aught we cared, the *sürıjy* might stop, but with *him* our distinct understanding was, that he should see us to Trebizond to-night. His tartar spirit was roused for the first time during the journey, and putting spurs to our horses we skimmed over the first two hours in one. Then the poor *sürıjy*, more alarmed than ever for his horses, overtook us. But he was a *Turk*, and we had not misjudged that such a decided step would improve his temper. We proceeded on in greater harmony and at a rapid pace. Our road was good, and the aspect of the country improved as we approached the city. The houses of the people were respectable, and on here and there a height appeared a palace. The hills seemed to possess an excellent soil, wild fig-trees marked a milder climate, and the improved colour of the bread, exposed for sale in the shops, indicated an advance in civilization. We reached Trebizond at 8 and a half P.M. and were hospitably received and entertained, during our stay, by the English consul, Mr. Brandt.

Trebizond was known to the Greeks by the name of *Trapezus*, and according to them its foundation was laid far back in the ages of fable. As one of the constellation of Greek colonies which illuminated the southern coast of the Euxine, it traced its origin to Sinope, the mother of them all; and Sinope claimed for its founder a member of the expedition of the Golden Fleece. Four hundred years before the Christian era, Xenophon found it inhabited by Greeks, among whom he happily recruited his ten thousand, worn out by their retreat of 1600 miles from the plains of Babylon.\* It was an important city of the Greek empire of Constantinople, until the subjugation of that empire by the crusaders left it independent. Then its duke, already of the imperial family of Comneni by birth, assumed to himself the dignity of emperor. His dominions extended from Sinope to the Phasis, and his family reigned more than 250 years, from the beginning of the thirteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century. Then it submitted to Mohammed Second, the conqueror of Constantinople, and Trebizond has ever since formed an integral part of the Turkish empire.†

It is prettily situated along an open shore, at the foot of a hill, which rises behind and commands it, and intercepts the view of mountains at a distance. Hardly any remains of its ancient times

\* Gillies' Hist. of Greece, chap. 26.

† Gibbon's Dec. and Fall, l. 61, 68.



appear, except perhaps the piers of a harbour, now used only for *kayiks* or small craft; and a distant view left us doubtful whether even they are any thing but natural ledges of rocks just beneath the water. Its present walls, or at least a part of them along the coast, now in a falling state, probably date back to the times of the Comneni. Many of its inhabitants, especially the Christians, live without the walls on the east; and numerous fruit trees, among which their houses are interspersed and almost hidden, surround them with rural charms. The olive, grape, fig, and orange find here a congenial climate; and the lemon too is cultivated with success, but does not come to maturity in the open air. From the warmth of the climate, fevers are not uncommon in the autumn, but we did not learn that it is esteemed especially unhealthy. The plague committed some ravages the last year, and was said to exist at Jevizlik during our visit.

In trade Trebizond has long since eclipsed its parent Sinope, and all its sister ports along the coast. It is now the principal port on the southern shore of the Black Sea, and almost the only one visited by European vessels. Still its harbour is bad, and its trade small. Some vessels anchor here in an open road on the east, and others, for more security, stop at Plátana, some distance to the west. Six or eight European vessels only were in port when we were there, and that, I believe, was an unusual number. They all come from Constantinople, and bring little besides salt, and a few European goods for the Persian market. Having discharged these, they proceed to Redoot-kúlaah, Taganrog, Odessa, or elsewhere, for a return cargo, but rarely find one here. Native vessels, however, often sail directly for the capital. Of course, there is occasional communication with almost every important port in the Black Sea. Besides the English consul already mentioned, who adds to his official functions the employment of a merchant, there is also a consul for the French, and another for the Sardinian nations. Add to these the *attachés* of their consulates, and hardly another European resident is found in the place.

The *Greeks*, both here and in the interior, speak a corrupt modern Greek. An Armenian of the place had told us at Erzroom, that they amount in the city to 900 families; but a more credible informant on the spot, assured us, that they are only 500. They have nine parishes, with an archbishop at their head, and some of their churches, which are numerous, bear marks of a venerable



antiquity. They had had a grammar school of some respectability; but two teachers having died successively, not long since, it was not at present in operation.—The *Armenians*, also, speak their own language, and amount to 250 families. They are divided into four parishes, with three or four churches, and a bishop, who commands also *Gümish-kháneh*. He was at the latter place during our visit, and we failed of seeing him; but a letter from him to a protestant friend was shewn us afterward, which expressed any thing but a bigoted attachment to his church. We heard of an Armenian school for males, with about 150 children; but none for females was to be found, though a few females we were told can read, and perhaps they occasionally teach a few others.—The *papal Armenians* number from 80 to 90 families, and have one church. They were formerly under the Armenians, and their two priests were banished at the time of the persecution of their sect. One, however, remained in a neighbouring village, and he was now in town. Their public services, as is the case with the papal Armenians generally, are in their own ancient tongue, and their clergy are of the Armenian nation, educated at Venice, or in Mount Lebanon, or, our informant added, at Mardín. No papal convent exists in town, or in its vicinity; nor are there here any European papal priests.—The estimate of *moslem* families given us, varied from 3500 to 4500. Yet our best informants considered the whole population of Trebizond to be no more than 15,000 souls. And our own impression was, that the latter estimate cannot be far from correct.

The head of the pashalik of which Trebizond is the capital, takes a respectable rank among the pashás of the empire, and at present bears the title of ser-asker. His province now extends, we were told, from Batoom to Baffra on the coast, and reaches far enough inward to embrace Kara-hisár. Being inhabited by a variety of rude people, and abounding in mountain fastnesses, it formerly suffered much from anarchy, and was infested with robbers. In the country, a sort of nobility called *déreh-begs*, or valley lords, lorded it over the peasants, had constant feuds among themselves, and despised the authority of the pashá. In the city, assassinations were common, and perpetrated with impunity. Even many of the boldest assassins and leaders of insurrections in Constantinople, have originated here. Of course the capital is indebted to Trebizond for some of its ablest men. One of the highest officers in



the divan has now a brother here, who is a common *papoochy*, or shoemaker, in the bazár. The present pashá, though a dervish, and of course a bigot, has effectually put down or destroyed the *déreh-begs*.

A majority of the peasants around Trebizond, we were told, are of the Greek race, and speak the Greek language. Some have been already mentioned, who, though still secretly Christians, profess the moslem religion. In the district of Sürmene also, near Oof, about 6 hours east of Trebizond, are many Greek moslems. Of some 30 or 40 villages, perhaps three-fourths of the inhabitants were formerly of the Greek church. But being long ago reduced to despair by the oppression of their Turkish masters, they embraced the Mohammedan faith. They still speak Greek.—Among the Armenians, also, of whom there are some in the pashalik out of the city, a considerable body profess Mohammedanism. The district they inhabit is three or four days east of Trebizond, in the interior between Rizeh and Batoom. It is called Hamshén, we were told, and doubtless it takes its name from the town of Hamshén, formerly a place of some note in the ancient Armenian province of Daik.\* Our informant, a papal Armenian of Trebizond, estimated its population at three or four thousand families, inhabiting 70 or 80 villages. The greater part embraced Mohammedanism some 200 years ago; but they still speak Armenian, and many of their women know no other language.—These are believed to be unique cases in Turkey, where members of a Christian nation have become moslems, without being speedily so amalgamated with Turks or Arabs, as to lose sight of their descent, and forget their national language. Long as Mohammedans have ruled over Greeks and Armenians, national landmarks are yet distinctly to be traced, and a body of Greek or Armenian moslems is still an anomaly. How far might the parallel be run between their case and that of the Jews?

A prominent division of the inhabitants of the pashalik, are the *Laz*, or *Lazians*. They live east of the city, along the coast, and in the adjacent mountains, bordering upon the frontier of Gooriel. According to the best information we could obtain, they have no original language of their own, but speak a kind of *patois*, which is a Mingrelian dialect with a large mixture of Turkish. In religion they are moslems, and strict adherents of the sunny sect. "But,"

\* St. Mart. vol. 1, p. 78.



said a Turkish informant, "we have a proverb, that as among fruits the worst are *cheráz* (cherries); so among moslems the worst are the *Laz*. They will at any time," he added, "kill a man for an onion." They are, in fact, much depised by all their neighbours, and branded with the reputation of being robbers, thieves, and villains.

Before leaving Trebizond, I would say a word respecting its suitability for a missionary station. Were one established, it would be rather a mission to Greeks than to Armenians. The large proportion of the former in the city and in the country, you will have learned from what has been already said. Whether a similar wakefulness of mind would make them as promising subjects of improvement as their countrymen elsewhere, we did not learn; but we may naturally suppose it, for they are of genuine Greek descent. Our accounts of the existence of their ancestors on the southern shore of the Euxine, as an integral branch of the Greek race, go as far back as we have any that are authentic respecting Greece itself. How numerous may be the relics of the other Grecian colonies along the coast to the westward, we did not learn. But doubtless missionaries at Trebizond might extend their arms far, and to good effect in that direction. At *Gümish-kháneh*, too, in the interior, an important branch might be established. While, therefore, you plant missions in ancient Attica, Argos, Ionia, and Byzantium, let not the descendants of the Argonauts be forgotten.

In reference to the Armenians, too, Trebizond would be an important station. Twelve or thirteen hundred souls of that people in the city itself ought not to be neglected. But especially would it be valuable as a key to Armenia. It is the nearest port to that country, and the only one by which books and the various apparatus for intellectual and moral improvement can be introduced. Should Erzroom again become the centre of a numerous Armenian population, as it doubtless will, and missions be established there and around it, Trebizond must be necessarily occupied as an intermediate station. Nor will its importance in a similar relation be hardly less to a mission among the Nestorians. Such a mission will absolutely require an agent, either missionary or otherwise, at this port. Its vicinity to *Redoot-kúlaah*, the port of Georgia, and frequent communications with it, might make it important, also, in reference to any connection that may be formed with the missionaries in Russian Armenia. Nor perhaps would opportunities



be wanting of sending out an occasional ray of light to all the dark places around the eastern and northern shores of the Black Sea.— In reference to houses and other conveniences for families, to society and opportunities for communicating with home, the little we saw of it gave me the impression, that it would not be far behind Beyroot, when that place was first occupied by our missionaries.

Our old enemy, the ague and fever, which had visited Mr. Dwight before our departure from Tebriz, and again at Erzroom, availed itself of our delay at Trebizond to renew its attacks more violently upon us both, and induced a debility, which, added to the excessive tedium and wearisomeness of long journeying by land, made us glad to step upon the deck of a vessel and be carried passively on our way. We embarked for Constantinople on the 14th of May, on board a ship bearing the Austrian flag, and belonging to the port of Cattaro, on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Venice. Her master and crew called themselves Illyrians. I had, on a former voyage, become acquainted with some of the same race in sailing on board a vessel of Ragusa, a port on the same coast farther to the north, and well known in the Mediterranean for the number of its ships, and the nautical taste and enterprise of its inhabitants. They were papists; but our present captain was of the Greek church, and we were interested to learn from him, that nearly half of his fellow-citizens are of the same faith. The Austrian government, he assured us, makes no distinction between the two in their civil rights and privileges. Their language he called Illyrian, and said its affinity to that of the Russian is so close, that the two nations can with little difficulty understand each other; but it has no resemblance to the Albanian. The books of his church, he assured us, are in Illyrian, and are the same as the Russian; to go to a Russian church, and to one of their own, is the same thing. The whole eastern coast of the Gulf of Venice, together with Bosnia and Servia, is occupied, he said, by the same Illyrian race. He owned the ship of which he was master, and had grown old in the Black Sea trade.

We found sailing in the Black Sea very unpleasant, owing to the state of the atmosphere, and the constant changeableness of the force and direction of the winds. The sky was generally hazy and dark, and occasionally discharged violent showers of rain; and the wind would vary almost instantaneously from a gale to a calm, and



And add to this the hireling character and debasement of the clergy, the excessive ignorance and degradation of the great mass of the laity, and the want of moral principle universally manifested in conduct immoral or vicious. Surely, if in them we are to recognize one of the legitimate forms into which genuine Christianity may throw itself, too much credit has heretofore been given to the gospel as a refiner and purifier of our nature.

The only apology that can be made for them is the stale one, which would send to heaven in a mass all the nations of the earth who "have changed the truth of God into a lie"—viz. *that they are sincere*. The sincerity of their faith I would most fully allow. Judging from its effects, we may well fear that it is more sincere than that of many Christians among us, for it has more influence upon their conduct. But in what are they sincere? In believing that they do what is right? that their daily conduct is pleasing to God? Far from it; they know that they do wrong; that their conduct is sinful. Nor do I believe that the followers of any false religion in the world are sincere in this respect. So far as we have had opportunity to analyze their sincerity, all are ready to confess that in many things they offend God. *They are sincere in believing that their superstitious rites and ceremonies will cancel their sins*. But can such sincerity save them? It is the very thing that encourages them to indulge in sin. It makes them feel secure in courses which they know to be wicked. It leads them blindfold to perdition.

But, though they are in a perishing state, their rescue is not to be despaired of. For, another consideration we would suggest respecting them is, *that their reformation is practicable*. It is so because the truth can be brought to bear upon their minds. Christians in Mohammedan countries are accessible to missionaries.—In the *Turkish empire* may the missionary enter at every point and labour among them, with no Turkish ruler disposed, *of himself*, to hinder or make him afraid in so doing. Wherever he finds them, may he plant the standard of the cross, and moslems, if left to themselves, will look on with indifference. Only from the Christians may opposition be expected to originate. And thus far we have reason to bless God that the *Oriental* churches have, with hardly an exception, been indisposed to resort to it. From papists, wherever we meet them, opposition is to be expected. From them, it is believed, has arisen all that has been experienced.



But they are only a few hundred thousands, while their Oriental brethren amount to millions. And the latter, wherever the experiment has been tried, unless under papal influence, allow us to instruct and enlighten them by schools, by circulating Bibles and tracts, by religious conversation, and expounding the Scriptures. Already are missions established among them at several places; other places have long been known as presenting open doors for us; and our present journey has added to the number of prospective stations which can be immediately occupied to advantage.— We have been led into *Persia* also, and there likewise have found a field ripe for the harvest. In view of what has been already said respecting the Nestorians, we may ask, what shall hinder us from preaching the gospel in *Persia* also? There lies, indeed, between it and Europe an inhospitable tract of country difficult to be passed. But shall that be an insurmountable barrier to Christian benevolence, which English travellers annually pass, for wealth, for honour, or for curiosity? Let every Christian blush for the weakness of his love to souls that will not answer, No!

And when truth can thus be brought to bear upon the mind, are we not, as Christians, bound to believe a reformation to be practicable? Every *scriptural* ground of discouragement is removed. God's promises of a blessing upon the preaching of his word are made applicable; and to be discouraged is to want faith in God. Be it that obstacles to the triumph of truth, arising from ignorance, from prejudice, or from bias to sin, are exceedingly great, yet so long as the truth will be heard, the power of God is pledged for its efficacy. And what other encouragement has an evangelical minister of the gospel anywhere? He can in no case change the heart. It is his to use the means, and look to God by faith to give them efficacy. Only one circumstance can clear the Christian from the heavy charge of unbelief in being discouraged from attempting the conversion of men in any part of the world; and that is, an impossibility, from whatever cause, of bringing the means of grace to bear upon the mind. Nay more, the same circumstance alone can clear him from the heavier charge of disobedience to the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." It was only from those cities that *would not receive nor hear them* that the twelve were authorized to depart, shaking off the dust of their feet against them. Jonah



was no more excusable for refusing to publish the word of the Lord in the heathen Nineveh, than if he had been ordered to preach it at Jerusalem. Oh! how many like Jonah have there been in the church, shrinking from that obedience to the command of their Saviour, which would long ere this have carried her triumphant over every false religion to the final consummation of her glory! Groaning under God's curse upon them, how often has she been tossed upon the billows of war and persecution, or, what is not a less hindrance to her progress, been made to lie still and decay in the dead calm of unevangelical formality! The remnants of her wreck are scattered through the Mohammedan empires, and her motionless frame lies rotting upon Christian Europe! May no disobedient Jonahs bring curses like these upon our American Zion! If we shrink not from our duty to the world, she will glide safely into the haven of millennial rest.

Another important consideration is, *the relation in which these nominal Christians stand toward Mohammedans.*—Their present influence is exceedingly to be deprecated. The moslem has hitherto known Christianity only as the religion of the Christians around him. And in such a position are they placed by his oppressive laws, that in all the associations of his earlier and his riper years, they occupy the rank of despised inferiors. Such too, I am sorry to say, is their conduct, that he has ever been able to look upon the comparative practical effects of their Christianity and of his Mohammedanism with self-congratulation. Never in the course of their history have Mohammedans been brought in contact with any form of Christianity that was not too degenerate in its rites, its doctrines, and its effects to be worthy of their esteem. Preach to him Christianity, therefore, and the moslem understands you to invite him to embrace a religion which he has always regarded as beneath him, and as less beneficial than his own.

But their influence may be made to be as salutary as it is now deleterious. Indeed the missionary, when he sees the pecuniary oppressions, civil disabilities, and systematic contempt to which, after centuries of unshaken endurance, they still perseveringly submit for their religion, when a profession of Mohammedanism would at any moment bring relief from them all; and is led to wonder at the steadfastness with which they have clung to the mere *form* of religion so long after they have lost its *power*; will per-



celve in it the ordering of a wise Providence, that a door ~~is~~ kept open, through which missionaries may enter and plant the standard of the cross in the centre of the otherwise impenetrable bulwarks within which Mohammedanism has intrenched itself. If corrupt forms of Christianity have prejudiced moslem against it, and the ungodly lives of its professors give them complacency in their own corruptions, present to them Christianity in its purity, exemplified in lives of piety, and their apology for rejecting it must vanish; the glory of their own religion must be turned into shame. Let every missionary station raise up from the corrupt mass of nominal Christians around it, a goodly number of true followers of the Lamb, and it will be a city set on a hill which cannot be hid, a light to lighten the Gentiles also. Had the churches of the East remained as when the apostles planted them, how long since would Mohammedanism have shrunk away from their holy contact? Or, rather, would it have ever existed? Restore to them their primitive purity, therefore, and the prop upon which Mohammedanism has so long stayed itself is gone, and it must fall. Remove it from the darkness, where, like an unsightly weed, it has grown so rankly, into the noontide blaze of true religion, and it must wither and die.

Our encouragement is, that while "the god of this word" has so carefully defended this strong citadel of his dominions on every other side, he has here left open a point of attack. Mohammedan law denounces death without mercy upon every apostate from Mohammedanism; and wherever that law is in force, direct attempts to make proselytes may naturally be regarded as highly objectionable. But by labouring among Christians, we gain an easy entrance into the heart of our enemy's territory. And if the victory over the false prophet is to be one of the most glorious in the final triumphs of the Lamb, should not we deem ourselves happy in being able to engage thus early and advantageously in the contest, perhaps hard and long, from which it is to result? How different would have been the prospect, had Mohammedans exterminated, instead of tolerating Christianity in the regions which they conquered! To be sensible of the contrast, look along the whole coast of northern Africa, where the flock once fed by Augustines and Cyprians has so long been extinct, and a few foreigners and Jews are now the only tangible population. The



bearing of our labours in Western Asia upon Mohammedanism increases inconceivably their importance; and we look with intense interest upon every new station that is formed as an additional intrenchment thrown up against the armies of the false prophet.



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Gümish-kháneh is on the left of the river, about an hour and a quarter below where we first came upon it, and not in sight of the direct road. Leaving the margin of the stream, you climb the mountain by a good path for half an hour, and find its houses near the top, rising one above another along the sides of a ravine, which just below sends out on either hand remarkable projections of perpendicular rock. They seemed to be nature's provision for its defence, but man had not availed himself of them, and not a gun nor a battlement appeared. We reached the town at a quarter before 11 A.M., having come a distance of 6 hours from Porodór. Our observations at Gümish-kháneh were necessarily limited; for, arriving hungry and sleepy, and in haste to proceed, we were obliged to improve the few hours of our delay in eating and sleeping. I have already informed you, that it is governed, as well as the province of which it is the capital, by a pashá of two tails, who is subject to the pashá of Erzroom. Some Armenians of the place had told us at Chiftlík, that its population consists of 200 Greek, 200 Turkish, and 500 Armenian houses; and a papal Armenian of Trebizond had assured us at Erzroom, that out of 2000 houses which occupy it, 500 are Greek, 70 Armenian, from 5 to 10 papal Armenian, and the rest Turkish.

We obtained no information here to reconcile these discrepancies; except that in passing through the bazárs, hardly any moslems appeared, and we therefore judged that the Christians far outnumber them. We were informed, too, that the Greeks are much the most numerous class of Christians, and have five churches with a bishop of their own; while the Armenians have but one church, and are subject to the bishop of Trebizond. The pashalik, likewise, is said to be full of Greeks; and perhaps for this reason the high mountain in it, which has been repeatedly mentioned by the name of *Giaoor-dagh*, received that appellation, which means *infidel mountain*. In the ravine near the town is the celebrated silver mine, which has given to it its name of *Gümish-kháneh*, or place of silver. Specimens of solid ore were given us, but we afterward understood, that a dust or sand is procured which is richer. It contains lead and silver, but the proportion of the latter is so small as hardly to pay for refining. Copper mines are found elsewhere, at a distance from the town.—The Russians remained here too short a time to leave many permanent traces, or to take away many of the Christian inhabitants.