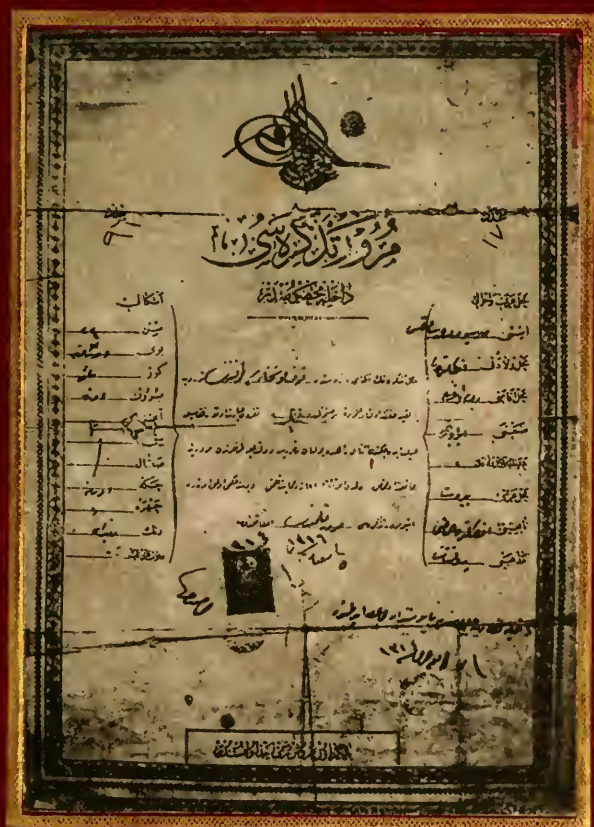


Through Five Turkish Provinces



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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DR. M. J. S. F. J.

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THROUGH FIVE TURKISH PROVINCES

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By

MARK SYKES

OF JESUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON
BICKERS AND SON
LEICESTER SQUARE
1900

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DEDICATED
TO
THE OFFICERS CIVIL AND MILITARY OF
H.I.M. THE SULTAN OF TURKEY
WHO
BY THEIR HOSPITALITY AND KINDNESS
MADE MY JOURNEY
POSSIBLE.

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PREFACE.

IN the spring of 1898 I renewed my acquaintance with the Hauran and commenced some investigations which I resolved to continue at the earliest opportunity. To enable me to do so, the authorities of my college at Cambridge kindly gave me leave of absence for the Lent term of 1899. I left England with the intention of spending three or four months in the Syrian desert, but, when I reached Damascus, I found that I was unable to obtain the necessary permit. The consequence was that I went over what to me was new ground, and visited Aleppo, Baghdad, Mosul and Van; coming home by way of Mount Ararat, Erivan, and Batoum. In the following pages I have given an account of my travels. The delay in publication is due to a variety of causes; among others to the fact that since the beginning of December last I have been with my militia battalion first at Aldershot and then in South Africa.

The notes which have served me for the compilation of this little book were jotted down day by day ; whatever erroneous opinions may be expressed were formed on the spot and are not due to subsequent investigations. I have been blamed for not making "more of a book": to have done so would have been easy enough. I need but have padded what I have written with historical and geographical information, which it is better to seek in works on history and geography, and with crude and worthless criticisms of men, manners and institutions. I have preferred to state simply what has come under my own observation and not to ape the omniscience of the journalist or of the globe-trotter. The matter which is printed in Appendix I. originally appeared in the *Review of the Week* and I have to thank the editor of that paper for kindly allowing me to reprint it.

I had hoped to have been able to give many more illustrations: but my films were "fogged" in the process of development—a result which, I am informed, frequently happens when professionals deal with the work of amateurs.

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THROUGH FIVE TURKISH PROVINCES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

WHEN I reached Damascus, in the early days of 1899, I had the intention of again visiting the Hauran; but difficulties arose and I resolved to go to Baghdad by way of Aleppo. I took with me a dragoman, a cook, a waiter, four muleteers, and a groom; seven Syrian mules, fine willing beasts capable of carrying heavy loads; two good country horses for myself and one each for the cook and the waiter; a Persian pony for the dragoman; and last, though not least, a Kurdish sheepdog that answered to the name of Barud, *i.e.* Gunpowder, and not only attended the pitching and striking of the camp but after nightfall undertook the entire responsibility of guarding it. My camp consisted of three tents. One was used by me to sleep in; another I used during the day and my servants at night; the third served as a kitchen. The tents provided by Messrs. Cook

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and other contractors are excellent for touring in Syria, but they will not do for a long journey where hard work is to be expected. For that purpose either military bell tents or those known as "the tortoise" should be chosen as two of these will go on a mule ; whereas one of the others, technically known as Egyptian tents, is a heavy load. I had tortoise tents, which were provided with loops for fastening them on to the mules. The muleteers however covered the loops in wrapping them up and packed them in such a way that they fell off three or four times a day. The Syrian method of loading mules is very bad, the pack-saddle being merely a species of paillasse with a loose girth on which the loads are slung with ropes ; so that if the mule increases his speed beyond that of a slow walk the loads slip round or fall off. This entails so much delay that another time I should take my own mule saddles.

The most important of my attendants was 'Isá Kubrusli the dragoman, a man of Cypriot descent. Thirty years ago a dragoman was a person of importance ; a man similar in character to the confidential courier who in the last century accompanied young noblemen on the grand tour. But he has degenerated and for the most part is now simply a bear leader to hoards of English and Americans who invade

Syria during the touring season. 'Isá is one of the very few of the old dragomans still left and he is a thoroughly trustworthy man of great experience. Thirty years ago he was, during the Abyssinian campaign, servant to Colonel Thesiger, now Lord Chelmsford. Afterwards he was with Captain, now Sir Charles, Wilson on his famous expedition to Mount Sinai. Later again he accompanied Mr. E. H. Palmer, and only by an accident missed being in the ill-fated expedition which resulted in the murder of that distinguished professor.

It is easy to conceive that such a man should imagine that the English have degenerated when he sees the ill-mannered and irreverent mobs that now flock to Jerusalem; and I have often wondered if those insensate vulgarians who, to the accompaniment of bells and blaring horns, scorch along the road to Bethlehem have any idea of the righteous contempt which they earn for themselves and their unfortunate country. 'Isá often used to tell me that the English had changed. "Beforetime the English," he would wail, "always very rich; always he have long barbe (beard); always he ride it like really man; shoot it very good; and give plenty baksheesh. Now everything very different. Many very fat and wear rubbish clotheses; many very old men; many

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very meselable ; some ride like monkeys ; and some I see afraid from the horses." One set of our countrymen excited his deepest contempt. "Den noder kind of Henglish he not believe notin ; he laugh for everything and everybody ; he call us poor meselable black ; he say everything is nonsense and was no God and notin ; dis is de vile and if many Henglish come like dis den our God he come hangry for your nation, Sir, and he shake down de governoor Henglish and his ship and his country."

But if 'Isá thought that the English had degenerated he certainly thought them superior to most other peoples. Germans he thought mean ; Russians a "vile beas'ly dirty people" with "bad sense in de head and bad smell in his body." He said "we laugh for de Italian because he not got good sense ;" and as for the French they are "all de same like monkey sometime he laugh sometime he sorry he shake de head he shake de hand and is like foolish man." His judgements on the people of Syria were equally trenchant. He liked the Christians of Bethlehem for "dis is very good very quiet and nice nation" ; but "the Maronites nation is very vile he do shame busy (business) because he got no sense." The Armenian he described as a "debil liar and no shame 'tall."

The Circassians he said have "got sense like de Henglish"; but the Jews he abominated, "dis man is more vile more dirty more beas'ly from all de world because he dirty like Rooshan and robber like Armenian." Finally he greatly preferred to be governed by the Turk than by the Russian; "I pray our God he help de Toorkish if de Rooshan commence make fight." So much for 'Isá and his opinions,¹ for it is time to say a word about my other servants.

The cook was named Michael Sala. He was a brown-complexioned fellah, a type of hundreds who may be seen any day looking for work outside Shepherd's hotel in Cairo. He had travelled a good deal and had among other places visited Zanzibar and Bombay. Jacob Arab, my waiter, was a young, fair-haired, blue-eyed Caucasian who would pass for anything but a Syrian; he was a hot-tempered youth but willing and honest. He and Michael were Latin Christians from Jerusalem: 'Isá, too, was a Christian but my muleteers were moslems from Jerusalem and the Lebanon. Muleteers as a class are inclined to be very slow in all their movements and are apt to complain of long days, but with a little tact and firmness they can be easily managed. Three of mine

¹ See Appendix, p. 119.

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were faithful hardworking fellows ; but Omar their chief, a huge man with staring eyes and a harsh strident voice, had an abominable temper and an infinite capacity for idling. The other servant, Halíl, was what 'Isá called "one servant for the horses" ; but he was also entrusted with the luncheon basket, my kodak, and my rifle.

Having spoken of my servants I had better now describe how the day was passed. The time of rising depended on the length of the coming day's march. An average day's work is from seven to nine hours ; a short one from five to six ; a long one twelve or more. It is always well to arrange for arriving at the next encampment about four o'clock in the afternoon even if this necessitates getting up at three in the morning. I was generally roused from sleep by the cries and disputes of my servants, and soon Jacob would appear with breakfast,—ham and eggs with toast. I ate this heartily and then tubbed. Twenty minutes later the muleteers would be tying the last cords round my canvas house previous to slinging it on the mule's back. If my escort were leaving, I should now pay their baksheesh ; and, as soon as they were convinced that they would get no more, they would loudly protest their regret at

going no further and their sorrow at leaving the "konsool." Meanwhile the whole village would be gathered round. Children would cast longing eyes at the sardine tins which marked the spot where the kitchen had stood; their mothers would glean any odds and ends that might be left behind; while the whole male population would gather round the dying fire and gossip in whispers of the fabulous wealth of the "konsool," of his ridiculous appearance, of his strange garments, and of his outlandish saddle. Directly the last load had been slung, a start would be made amid a general buzz and murmur of *masalam yá sidi* followed perhaps by a muttered but inaudible *dínak yá káfir*. My system of travelling was to ride behind the mules till luncheon, which was of course the half-way break between one post and the other. The mules would then continue with the greater part of the escort while I sat and rested for an hour. Of course a saddle horse is supposed to go faster than mules but, as a matter of fact, with light loads and mounted muleteers the mules could keep up the same pace. I found by experience that it is very easy, when riding on horseback, to drive mules by simply riding from side to side in their rear. You keep them together in this

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way and you keep an even pace for the caravan. Of course muleteers do not like this, as it not only shows how easily they might be dispensed with but also obliges them to walk considerably faster than is their custom. I certainly believe that with light loads and with mounted muleteers travelling could be made much easier and quicker.

The road would roughly follow the course of the river; sometimes it would be actually along the bank; very rarely would it be more than three miles away. The morning passed quickly. The time was spent in asking and answering questions or telling tales of the ordinary oriental type,¹ and occasionally a song would be sung; whichever it was there would be an incessant undercurrent of cries and abuse from the muleteers urging on the pack-mules:—*yallah yallah yá shebáb*, “Go on, go on fair youth;” *Allah a’tikum el ‘afiyeh*, “God give thee strength;” *Allah egherhum Allah*, “O God help them, O God.” But if a beast stumbled we should hear *amar yá min ‘ainak*, “O blind one look with your eyes;” or *mwatah yá ibn harámi*, “Curse you, dead son of a thief;” or perchance *dínak yá ma’lún*, “Curse your religion O cursed one.” When we were

¹ See Appendix, p. 134.

about half way we began to look out for a wood, "a tall rock in the wilderness," or a cave where "el lanch" could be eaten in shade and peace. When a suitable spot had been found, 'Isá and Halíl would spread the eatables on a napkin. During ramadhán the escort would sit down a little way off and watch the "infidel" and his servant drink forbidden liquors and eat the flesh of unclean animals. It is somewhat difficult for those to whom it is a daily article of food to grasp the moslem feeling with regard to the eating of swine's flesh. To a true moslem a horse, or even a dog, would be preferable; for the hog is regarded as the acme of all that is foul, unhealthy, and loathsome. I have often known a soldier refuse even to pass a tin whereon a good Hampshire porker was depicted; and I have seen him stamp on the labels and destroy tins which had contained ham, though every closed metal receptacle is an object of more or less value.

After luncheon a cigarette would be smoked and the basket repacked. We should then set out again and ride on till we were about three miles from our destination, when with the help of glasses we could generally distinguish the site of the camp. If the tents were not already raised we used to wait for half an hour

or so and then canter to them. I should find the muleteers finishing their evening quarrel and taking the mules to water; and the mudír of the village waiting to offer his respects and his hospitality. During ramadhán I used then to serve out cigarettes to the whole party as I found it invariably tended to a general good humour. / In about an hour's time dinner would be ready. By eight o'clock comparative silence reigned in camp; but no matter at what time of the night I might awake if I peeped out of my tent I invariably saw one or two muleteers talking in low tones round the fire which is always kept burning. In fact, as Thackeray said, it seems that "no one in the East ever sleeps." Another thing I noticed is that Turkish sentries never patrol but always remain standing like sphinxes immovable and inscrutable.

Frequently on the day's march we met a caravan, the post, or some Bedouins. In the Euphrates valley, during the months of January and February, as a rule the caravans are those of Persian *hájis*, or pilgrims, bound for Damascus, where they join the great *hájj* for Mecca. Some of the pilgrims who may be fairly wealthy travel by *takht rawán*, or palanquin, which is used by men as well as by women; others are on

horseback and a few on foot. All as they pass cheerfully give the *salám* 'alaikum, "Upon you be the blessing," even to Christians, expecting to hear in reply 'alaikum es-salám, "And upon you also the blessing." The post, *el bosta*, is carried from station to station, at about five miles an hour, by the zaptiehs, or gendarmes, of whom I shall have more to say later on. The only other people one meets are the Bedouins and nomad felláhín. These one invariably mistrusts; and, when a party of them is seen ahead, there is a general unslinging of rifles and easing of cartridge belts. For my part as they passed I usually gave the blessing with my hand in the holster.

Those who wish, as I did, to travel in the wilder districts where an escort is necessary, must obtain permission to do so from the walí or governor of the *viláyet* or district; who, if he approves, either gives you a *buruldi*, a written permit, or telegraphs to the different police posts on your line of route. I was granted an escort by the walí of Damascus but did not receive a *buruldi* till I reached Aleppo; after which I received one in every *viláyet* I passed through except those of Bitlis and Erzeroum. The kind of escort of course varies according to the nature of the country. If a traveller is

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going through country where an attack is a possibility, I think that soldiers as well as zaptiehs are necessary. Zaptiehs are good as guides, they know the roads to a minute—all distances in the East are measured by time—but as an escort I think they are of little or no use when a really serious impediment is in the way, as their firearms are antiquated and often lacking in some essential part. The military, on the other hand, are well armed and have a very good idea of using their weapons. In districts where it is risky even for natives to travel one zaptieh may be quite enough, as he will show that you are coming with the sanction of the government and that you are not a person who may be robbed with impunity; but, as I have said, if it is a really unsettled locality, such as that adjoining Kerkúk, an escort of soldiers is better. As to this the authorities make no difficulty if you have a buruldi; where soldiers are necessary soldiers are given, and where zaptiehs are sufficient such are provided. I may say that during the whole of my journey I never had the least difficulty put in my way by any of his imperial majesty's officials, and that I was never allowed to perceive that I was an object of suspicion, though this must frequently have been the case.

CHAPTER II.

DAMASCUS TO ALEPPO.

I LEFT Damascus on January 17th, 1899. It was the first week of ramadhán and travelling in the month of ramadhán has its disadvantages; for fasting puts the muleteers into a very bad temper and the escort clamour for food at all hours of the night. The first day's march was a short one of five hours, a mere trial trip. The camp was pitched at Khan Aiash, a ruinous building which is also used as a barrack; ten or twelve mounted police are stationed there. They were smartly dressed, as, like most of the other troops in that district, they had been given new uniforms in honour of the German emperor's visit; which by the way seems to have been a greater success in Damascus than it was in Jerusalem. On my arrival I found the commander of the police, an oriental Sir John Falstaff, waiting with marked impatience for sunset that he might break his fast.

I left Khan Aiash the following morning about eight o'clock and arrived at El Kutaifeh some three hours later; it was then snowing

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hard and it seemed advisable to proceed no farther that day. Camping was out of the question and I was compelled to seek the shelter of the khan.

Before visiting the East one's idea of a khan is a large stone building with a fine entrance and broad open court, where picturesquely attired muleteers pass to and fro attending to the wants of their cattle. This idea is speedily dispelled. When you enquire for the khan you are taken to a long low mud wall in the middle of which a quantity of broken timber appears to have been placed quite casually. This is the door. After knocking at it for some minutes with the butt of your rifle or anything else which comes handy, you will hear curious groanings and creakings proceeding from within. Eventually the gate will slowly totter back and an elderly gentleman will appear; he looks at you and if he is quite satisfied with your appearance allows you to ride in. You then find that the interior in no way belies the exterior. On either side of the entrance is a long chamber in which the master of the khan gossips, over the charcoal fire, with the muleteers; and beyond this is a large enclosed space, resembling a ruinous fold-yard, in which donkey, smules or camels lie or stand on masses

of filth, while cocks and hens stride about among them.

The khan at El Kutaifeh was a bad specimen ; it was filthy and alive with fleas. 'Isá said to me in English " This is a meselable khan with rubbish master," and to the aforesaid master and his satellites " Why is not the khan clean? Prepare rooms for my master. Dogs and sons of dogs away. Make room. Shame upon you to stand idle when my master and I require shelter." Much to my disgust I was obliged to stay here, and a room was prepared for me by scraping off some of its superficial filth ; but I determined to get on with as little delay as possible. That El Kutaifeh once possessed a decent shelter for travellers is evident from the only thing of interest in the village—a ruined khan, built some four centuries ago. But now it has none. The only thing which enlivened my stay happened in the evening and really was a ridiculous scene. My horse broke loose. To catch it the muleteers threw stones at it; screamed *ta'l ta'l* that is " come here, come here;" and fought with each other. For three quarters of an hour they yelled, shrieked, and cursed, driving the horse about the whole time. It was then dead beat and was caught easily enough.

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The following day I set out for Nebk. On the road I stopped at an interesting old khan, in ruins of course. We rode on until eleven o'clock when we halted for luncheon. During the meal a very small and deformed Kurd passed along the road, by which we were to travel; half an hour later he came running back with loud cries, and told the officer that two bad men had tried to rob him. We consequently quickly mounted and cantered along the road, the dwarf holding the officer's stirrup, till we came upon two men—one a Kurd and the other a Syrian from Tripoli. They were immediately stopped and fastened together with a curious iron handcuff consisting of a bar of iron with a vice at each end into which one wrist of each prisoner was passed. A camel's hair rope was tied round their free hands and made secure to the policeman's stirrup. They made very little resistance; but loudly protested their innocence whilst the dwarf danced and jabbered like a maniac. We led them in this way some five or six miles and then inquired into the facts; and after a long cross-examination of all three it became quite clear that the dwarf had never had anything that could be stolen. It was getting late and I wished to push on to Nebk so I jokingly asked my dragoman why the officer

did not flog them all and let them go. This suggestion was repeated to him and acted on promptly. After a sound castigation all three were set at liberty, the dwarf being given three or four hundred yards start. We then continued our journey and arrived at Nebk at about four o'clock. I rode straight to the serai where the kaimakám of the district lived and paid him the usual compliments.

At one time or another I have interviewed four walís, a score of kaimakáms and as many mudírs, and whether it was the governor of a province the size of Scotland or the head man of a miserable little mud village the ceremony was the same. If you are visiting an official of any kind you are first led into an ante-chamber where various clients and litigants are waiting to interview the man of power. There is the shepherd who has been robbed, and perhaps the Bedouin who has robbed him; the merchant with a law suit; and the Christian who wants a post. Probably you will not be left long in this company. When the curtain which hangs before the office is raised you are bound by politeness to attempt to take off your boots; and if no one interferes with you it would be as well to actually take them off! This done you will enter the official sanctum. If you are

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expected, there will generally be a few of the higher officials sitting there to see you ; the sheikh of the mosque, the commander of the police, and possibly a military officer. A comfortable divan will run partly round the room, and the floor may be beautifully carpeted with Persian rugs ; but the walls are generally white-washed and bare of ornament, with the exception perhaps of a flaring English or French calendar. The only furniture, besides the divan, is a table with writing implements on it and generally an armchair for the official himself. When, on entering, you salute your host he will rise and motion you to a seat. A few questions will be asked as to where you are going ; what your occupation is in England ; why you are in that particular district ; where you came from ; and what your object is in travelling. They are especially anxious to know whether you are a government official ; and whether you are making maps, that is "spying out the country." When the very excellent coffee, which is always offered, comes in, the first cup is handed to the stranger and the conversation then takes a more general turn. At the time of my visit Crete was uppermost in the minds of my hosts, and I was often asked through my dragoman "Is it true that they make one meselable Greek

boy king for all the Crete?" On my saying that I was sorry this was so, the reply would be that:—"It is plenty shame for the Europe to take a meselable man like this; shame for the Turkish to leave it," or something to the same effect. After a couple of cups of coffee have been drunk your host will get to business, examine your passports and papers, and then give an order for the escort you will require to the next station. After lighting your second cigarette you may bid the official good-bye; but before he lets you go he will be sure to press his hospitality upon you and to tell you that you are free of his house and board. All this happened at Nebk; and I left the kaimakám with the desired order and with the assurance that if I liked to have his house it and everything in it belonged to me.¹

I declined his hospitality and returned to my camp for the night. A fearful storm of hail and rain woke me at two o'clock, but I did not get up till four; I then found my cook being extricated from the sodden ruins of the kitchen tent. The ground was a perfect morass and I saw that I could neither remain where I was nor move on to my next halting place. While I was pondering on this dilemma Ahmad

¹ See Appendix, p. 139.

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Effendi, the commander of the police, whom I had met the night before at the kaimakám's, sent his servant to ask me to stay with my servants at his house. His hospitality was extraordinary even for an oriental. He insisted on having meals cooked for me at the greatest inconvenience to himself, for as it was ramadhán he could not eat before sunset, and he would not allow me to provide any of the food. He would even have turned out of his bed and have slept on the floor but luckily my own bed was uninjured by the storm. When I left him four days later he absolutely refused to take any remuneration for putting us up and finding us with food; and, "like master like man," his servants would take nothing either. This most hospitable of men, who was about forty-five years of age, saw active service in the Russo-Turkish war and was one of the heroic defenders of Plevna under Osman Pasha. In that war he lost his left eye; he received a sabre cut on the face, of which he still bears the scar; and he was struck on the right arm and nearly crippled for life by a splinter of a shell. He is now responsible for the policing of Nebk and the surrounding country and he told me that he saw some pretty hard fighting with the Druses some three years ago. *Ad multos annos!*

During the course of that day a certain native Christian, a convert I believe of an English-speaking mission, thought it necessary to call upon me. He began his interview by attempting to find out to what church I belonged ; as I did not enlighten him he took me to be what many young Englishmen are or have the reputation of being, a free thinker, and commenced jeering at both Christianity and El Islam. When he discovered that his stupid irreverence neither amused nor pleased me, he changed the conversation and began to make the vilest insinuations against the honesty of my host, whose coffee by the way he was drinking. His object evidently was to induce me to go to his own house where he said he would put me up very cheaply ; but I need hardly say I declined his offer. This worthy said that the missionaries, by whom he was occasionally employed, never attempted to convert Mohammedans but entirely devoted themselves, so far as religion is concerned, to battling with other Christians. However this may be, I must in fairness say that I believe that their medical and educational works are carried on quite irrespective of sect or creed.

The next day it was snowing heavily and the weather was too cold for camping so I tele-

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graphed to Damascus for a carriage to take me to Aleppo. I then sent on most of the baggage. On the evening of the next day I walked over to the telegraph office to enquire about my carriage, and discovered that my waiter who had translated the telegram into Arabic had, with more than usual sagacity, placed my name as that of the person to whom it was to be sent and signed it with the name of the agent to whom it was addressed. It had reached Damascus and had been forwarded unopened to me at Nebk. That evening I superintended the sending of another telegram myself and about half past nine the following evening the carriage arrived drawn by four horses abreast. It was an antique monstrosity enormously broad, with a rumble for baggage behind. It had the appearance of a decayed bandbox on a brewer's dray; and, as I found to my cost, was extraordinarily uncomfortable. In it I left Nebk the following morning at half past five after bidding farewell to Ahmad Effendi, who gave me an escort of one Circassian and three Syrians.

The driver of the carriage pulled up at mid-day and announced that he would not go any further until his horses were rested as he said it was his custom never to drive after twelve

o'clock. I asked him if twelve hours would be sufficient to rest his horses and he unthinkingly replied in the affirmative ; I thereupon informed him that it was my invariable custom to start at midnight. To this of course he could make no objection ; but said that if the carriage fell over it would not be his fault. So we had to stay for twelve hours at Hasieh, the most desolate and filthy little village that it has ever been my luck to visit. It possesses two idiots instead of the proverbial one. The first is an ordinary *majnún* ; the other, and chief one, the mudír who did not think it necessary to entertain me, so that I had to spend my time in a felláhín house which was anything but pleasant or savoury. It consisted of a large heap of offal with four rooms leading off it : the first and best was occupied by the cow ; the second, which was not quite so clean, was given to me ; in the other two most of the villagers were gathered together to watch my cook preparing what he called "roast whale and potted hyæna" that is roast veal and potted ham.

We started again at midnight. Two soldiers rode in front, to show the way, and two others behind, to watch the coachman. It was a bright moonlight night and the road was per-

fectly clear. Notwithstanding this the carriage went through such a series of heavings and pitchings as would become a broken down tramp in an Atlantic gale. The dragoman and cook who were my companions accompanied every lurch with a loud cry of "Oah." The commotion grew serious and the discomfort increased when the carriage took a decided list to port, whereat my dragoman insisted on changing places with me as I was the heaviest. This in itself was a considerable achievement as the carriage contained, besides the cook the dragoman and myself, four pairs of saddle bags, a folding bed and four rugs, a medicine chest, a kodak, and a collapsible bath. I had hardly changed places and begun to settle down when the carriage fell on its side with a fearful thud which was accompanied by a howl of terror from the dragoman and the cook. The ensuing scene was not without a humorous side. The carriage opened and spat out a curious assortment of men and things on the scrub of the Syrian desert, and it was only when the cook, the bath, the medicine chest, and the dragoman, had been lifted off me that I was able to survey the scene of the accident. Its appearance reminded me exactly of those admirable pictures drawn in Christmas numbers of illus-

trated papers of Gretna Green elopements coming to grief in a ditch ; luckily however no lady was present, for the language made use of, whether in Arabic or in English, was neither that of the Koran nor that of the *Sunday-at-Home*.

Eventually we found that by good fortune little damage was done except to the hand of the coachman ; and as it was evident from the account the escort gave that he had intentionally upset the carriage I had little pity for him. The excitement was a little intensified by 'Isá trying to shoot the coachman with an unloaded revolver ; but the latter fortunately contented himself with brandishing a knife on the other side of the wreck.

When I had been there five minutes, I noticed, a hundred yards ahead, another carriage very like my own, only with three horses instead of four. I went up to it and on rapping at the window I found that it contained four native gentlemen bound for Homs, a place distant some four hours' journey from where we then were. The driver was cold and so these gentlemen had pulled up in the middle of the desert and let him in to smoke, chatter, and sleep, just as if the carriage were one of their Damascus cafés. They did not even tie

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up the horses but let them stand with the reins hanging loose behind their tails.

My carriage was tied together with various pieces of cord, and heaved on to its wheels again, and a couple of hours after the accident we were againl urching on towards our destination. Four hours' jolting brought us to Homs the kaimakám of which had received a telegraphic message from the walí at Damascus concerning my arrival. A guard was waiting to present arms as I drove past, and I was entertained with great circumstance. My friend Ahmad Effendi had highly praised an hotel in Homs ; I therefore visited it but found that in reality it was only a café with a large room in which were six beds. In this room a travelling theatrical company was quartered. The theatre opened out of the bedroom and I knew that, as it was ramadhán, the performance would last the greater part of the night. On this account I thought it would be advisable to seek lodging elsewhere ; so two hours later we started for a village called Restan where I was told that I should find good houses. It seems that very few travellers go to Homs. Certainly my arrival caused a considerable sensation ; and at my departure six or seven hundred people thronged round the carriage

and were dispersed with great difficulty by my escort.

We arrived at Restan without mishap about seven o'clock. It is a beautiful village perched on high jagged rocks. The houses are well built and the one I was directed to was the best I saw during the whole course of my journey. It was built entirely of stone and the rooms were not only scrupulously clean but were covered with grass carpets. The cattle were stabled at a good distance from the dwelling rooms so that the usual unsavoury odour was absent. The owner was very obliging and expressed the wish that I should take the house as a trifling mark of his regard and esteem.

At five o'clock next morning though it was raining hard we set out for Marra. The only place of any importance passed by us was Hama which is famous throughout the East for its groaning waterwheels, called *naouras*, which a friend tells me seem, from my description, to be like those in Portugal which bear much the same name. I paid my respects to the *kaimakám* who told me, while we were drinking coffee, that about six weeks before a Frenchman had passed that way on foot *très sale et avec une odeur abominable, mon excellence!* Though

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the officials treated me admirably, the inhabitants were none too friendly and were very inquisitive as to who I might be ; they being in guidebook parlance "proud and haughty moslems." As we drove through the bazaar an old beggar looked into our carriage and spat at us exclaiming *dínak yá káfir* which practically means "Curse your religion O unbeliever." I hit him on the head with a stick and the escort plied him with good stout riding whips ; so I think he may have repented his incivility.

After leaving Hama we first saw the curious villages of beehive huts. Every house is a collection of enormous beehives ; each room is shaped like a hive with a pointed dome and of course opens directly on the courtyard. These villages are certainly found from Hama to Aleppo and from Aleppo to the Euphrates ; but how much further north than Aleppo, if at all, I am unable to say.

We slept that night at Marra and next day drove to Serakib passing through the *kaimakmlík* of Ma'arret en-Na'mán. The streets of Ma'arret were so narrow that I could not reach the serai in my carriage ; but when we came to a standstill, I found an orderly with a fine Arab stallion gaily caparisoned with a red

worsted saddle and bridle. I mounted this and was conducted to the serai where the kaimakám awaited my arrival. To reach his official reception room, I had to pass through the common gaol where various evil doers, who were sitting about in chains, smilingly asked for baksheesh. The kaimakám received me well. As my coachman was inclined to be troublesome and wished to stop here, I had him brought up and saw how justice was administered. He strode in truculent and with folded arms, and my dragoman instantly saw that there was an excellent chance of having a considerable scene. Both parties began to fight; the dragoman cursed the coachman and the coachman cursed the dragoman. When the two were screaming their loudest the kaimakám handed me a cigar and began talking about Europe; only when they had exhausted the springs of their abuse did he intervene and then he quietly remarked that if the coachman did not drive on in half an hour he would remain there for some weeks. The coachman cursed and swore, flung himself on his knees, wept, hurled his tarboosh on the ground, but all to no purpose, he had to go. That evening about seven o'clock we arrived at Serakib, and here to my surprise I found the mules and

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baggage; mules and muleteers were in good health, nothing had been lost on the way, and nothing was damaged. The following day, after a drive of fourteen hours, I arrived at Aleppo. *Alhamdolillah.*

CHAPTER III.

ALEPPO TO DEIR.

ALEPPO is so frequently visited by tourists that I will not detain my readers by saying much about it. It struck me as being not altogether a pleasant town, but it contains some good buildings. Among others there is a remarkably well built military school which, strange to say, is almost complete. This I fancy is due to the influence of the wealthy Levantine merchants who are to be found there in considerable numbers and probably occupy the fine villas which abound on the outskirts of the town. The native inhabitants have an evil reputation. Their treatment of foreigners certainly leaves something to be desired ; for a visit to the picturesque Turkish quarter may prove unpleasant, as a hat is liable to attract stones. Aleppo is, I believe, the most northerly town where a species of the Delhi boil is to be found. It is a most annoying pest and very disfiguring, being a boil which varies in size from the diameter of a shilling to that of a penny. It takes six months to come and six

months to go, and when it does go it leaves a scar behind. When it attacks the corner of the mouth, it gives a most sinister expression to its victim for the rest of his natural life; one sees dreadful examples of this in the bazaars. I was told that, curiously enough, although everyone who lives in the town gets the "Aleppo button," in the neighbouring villages it is unknown.

I had an opportunity through the kindness of Mr. Barnham, the English consul, of visiting the citadel. From the outside it looks very imposing; the gateway is a fine piece of work and the doors are impressive. But the interior is little more than a ruin, and is disappointing in the extreme. I heard it stated while I was in Aleppo that the whole mass on which the citadel is built is artificial. This I could hardly credit, for as we went down into the subterranean chambers we passed through living rock, though it seemed that we must still be some distance from the bottom of the eminence on which the citadel stands. The subterranean chambers are very spacious but dark, the only light being through a little crack in the roof. There is a considerable quantity of early nineteenth century English shells, cannonballs, carronade and case shot: and I have heard

it said that there is a large collection of ancient weapons, but they were not forthcoming.

I came across a curious example of the growth of fiction while staying here. Mr. Barnham had on some occasion or another given a fancy dress ball to the European colony. The story which gained credit in the bazaars was that the English consul had clothed himself in curious raiment and put flowers in his hair and then called all his friends together that he might dance before them! A story probably not more untrue than many of those printed in reputable journals as coming from "our own correspondent" in some oriental country.

Nearly everyone I met, who was not a native, seemed to be trying to get away from the place, without success. Amongst others in the hotel where I stayed there was a French lady who had come to see her son who was employed in the *Régie*; she had been waiting there to see him for about six months and in all probability would be there for another six. There was an official of the Ottoman Bank who had come there with three clerks to make some enquiries; he expected to stay a fortnight but had already been there four months and, according to his own account would probably be there for

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another year. There was, too, an English lady who, I believe, was engaged in a perennial lawsuit with the Turkish government. So on the whole the company of the hotel was not lively, and I think I was looked on much in the same way as travellers are looked on in Mexico city, where the question is asked: "Why should this idiot come into an accursed place like this when he has a chance of being elsewhere?" But I only stayed among them for six days, at the end of which time I started for Baghdad escorted by two mounted infantry and by two zaptiehs.

The first day's march from Aleppo was to take us to Deir-el-Káfir. We lost our way after sunset and found the village by its smell, which reached us when we were at least a mile and a half away. The people complained of the badness of their crops, so noticing some enormous pits filled with manure I asked if they ever put any of it on the land. My question was received with contemptuous smiles; and I was asked in reply who would eat corn grown on land where such filth had been thrown. Taken all round the felláhín of this part of the world do not seem remarkable for their intelligence; in fact they are the most good-natured idiots it is possible to conceive. Their ideas

of time and space are *nil*. If you ask how far away a certain village is, you may be told "one hour" be the real distance anything from five minutes to twelve hours; or, when you are beginning to feel tired, everyone you ask during the space of say a couple of hours may tell you that you are only "seven hours" from your destination. This is really the most annoying form of stupidity I have ever met.

The following day we marched for about eight hours. At the village where we rested for luncheon, I came across a remarkable cure for biliousness; a man complained to me that he so suffered and, on my asking what he had done for it, he bared his back and showed me about thirty barbarous wounds inflicted with a red-hot knife. I reached Meskeneh at about six o'clock and for the first time saw the Euphrates, which, though not so disappointing as the Jordan, is not impressive. Its water is so muddy that it is impossible to see through a wine-glass filled with it. On the hills behind Meskeneh there are some interesting ruins, some Græco-Roman and some Mohammedan. I was especially struck by a brick minaret, which looked as if it might have been three or four centuries old.

Meskeneh is the first military post on the

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high road from Aleppo to Baghdad. These military posts, at one of which I stayed every night, are situated at distances from sixteen to twenty-five miles apart; their purpose is to keep order in the valley and to prevent the Anezeh Arabs from crossing the Euphrates. They are garrisoned by police or by mounted infantry; at Meskenah there were about fifty of the latter. These mounted infantry are I believe an entirely new departure of the Turkish military authorities and I should think a very sensible one. For fighting purposes the Turkish infantryman is without a rival, but in a country where irregular warfare is the order of the day battalions are useless and zaptiehs are not much better; but an Osmanli "Tommy" when mounted on a good mule is equal to any emergency, for he combines the mobility of the zaptieh with the advantages of good weapons and some knowledge of their use.

I only stayed one night at Meskenah; the next one I spent at Abu Hureirah, where I found myself in touch with the nomad felláhin of the Euphrates valley, who are a very poor reproduction of their Bedouin forefathers. The ground here is almost wholly uncultivated and, though in all directions there are signs of canals, everything has an appearance of desolation and

misery such as only the East can produce. A Circassian colony attempted to do some work; they built houses and cultivated the land with success, but were unable to stand the climate. I was sorry not to be able to visit some extraordinary ruins, eight miles or so on the other side of the Euphrates; but the only way of crossing the river, which is unfordable, is on an inflated skin and it would have been impossible to get the horses over.

I left Abu Hureirah at about six o'clock next morning. In the afternoon we passed a cliff which interested me as being the first place where I had seen crows in any number. I bought a Bedouin lance from a shepherd for about four times its value and, when I reached Hama, amused myself by tent-pegging with it which greatly impressed the four gendarmes who inhabit the place. When we left Hama, the following day, there was a dense fog which obliged us to keep the river bank close upon our left hand to maintain our direction: it did not lift till about three o'clock. On the way to Ragga I wanted to take a photograph, but with great cunning one of my muleteers managed to smash the tripod of my camera into three pieces.

Ragga was reached at about half past four.

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There is a town on the other side of the river which I made up my mind to visit, but when morning came I found that it was impossible. On arriving at the river bank I found a soldier bellowing loudly for a certain Abdullah who was the ferryman. We could see his craft on the other side of the river and several people standing about it; and eventually we persuaded one of them to go to the bazaar in the town and fetch him. I was told that it was his custom to keep even the post waiting four or five hours on the bank, till someone should cross from the other side, so that he might not run the risk of having a journey for nothing. After an hour's delay Abdullah appeared and absolutely refused to come across as he said that very likely the soldier would not pay his fare. We threatened him with our rifles but he was immovable; so I abused him roundly in Arabic, reviling his ancestors from Cain downwards and ending with that most abusive epithet "Pig and child of the remote ones" (otherwise swine), and then rode away relieved, feeling certain that he must have heard most of what I said.

I arrived at Mardan at about six o'clock in the evening. Next day's march was unpleasant as it rained heavily all the time. Camping that night at Et-Taríf, the following day I set

out for Deir. About two hours' distance from my destination I struck the new road which is in course of construction. It is a fine piece of work ; very broad and wonderfully level. But the inhabitants of this country with that peculiar perverseness which characterises orientals prefer stumbling over rocks and stones on one side or in a morass on the other to walking on the road. But this is only one example of oriental "cussedness." If it is possible to put a thing to a use for which it was never intended an oriental will do it. If you give him a Slade-Wallace spade, (which comprises a pick, a hammer, and a shovel) he will most probably use the pick as a pair of tongs ; the hammer as a weapon ; and the shovel as a tray to bring in your coffee. If you point out that the shovel is not a tray but is meant to dig trenches with when it rains, he will smile at you contemptuously and show you his new wood chopper which he always uses for that purpose. If you give him a coat he will either wear it the wrong way about, or cut off the sleeves for gaiters and then use the body as an umbrella. But I can give other examples which concerned myself. My tents, which were of English manufacture, were provided with waterproof cases. The muleteers of course covered the cases with tarpaulin sheets

to protect them from the rain but left my trunk, which was made of leather and therefore not quite waterproof, exposed. Again, as my saddle, being a European one, was the only one which did not gall the horse's back into a bleeding mass, they put two ill-fitting pads beneath it that it might do so. But this is a digression.

I arrived at Deir at half past three or thereabouts. Here the Turkish government seem to have been making improvements. On the northern side of the town there are some fine barracks and also a large military hospital with two little lodges at the gates. Over one is written in French *Pharmacie* and over the other *Salle de Consul*: I could not understand what the latter could mean till I was close up to it when I saw on the bottom of the frame *tation* in minute characters! On my arrival I called on the *mutesarrif* who was very obliging and hospitable. In the evening some Chaldean monks sent a message to tell me they would call the next morning and to warn me not to receive the Armenian patriarch; they did call and found with me the patriarch's vicar, who was warning me not to have any connection with the monks, and on seeing him they speedily retired. I did not learn what their

quarrel was about or why they thought it necessary to warn me against each other.

This Armenian ecclesiastic was a very intelligent and pleasant man. Over our coffee he told me a curious story which is worth repeating as it is so thoroughly oriental; it was told me in French, which he spoke perfectly, and I have translated it literally. A certain Frenchman, he said, thought it necessary for the honour of his country to walk round the world on foot, in imitation of some other lunatics, English and American, and in the course of his excursion he arrived at Deir. Being tired and thirsty he bought a bottle of arrack which he consumed and subsequently fell heavily on the ground as one dead. In this condition he was carried to the mutesarriif who was much disturbed in mind, for here was a European evidently ill, possibly dying, and there was not a consul or even a missionary within eight days' journey. If he died questions might be asked, governments provoked and international complications might ensue. He was pondering on these things and visions of gaols and bow-strings were floating before his eyes, when a heavy groan from the body on the ground startled him. What was to be done? Happy thought! There was the river.

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Do not start, he did not mean to drown him ! There were rafts and a strong current and in less than ten minutes the Gaul was securely lashed to the raft and started down the river to the next province ; the responsibility was shifted and the official breathed freely once more.

When my ecclesiastical friend had taken his departure I called on the bimbashi in command of the troops stationed there. As it was ramadhán he was still in bed and I had to wait ; so I was invited into what was apparently the orderly room. Two captains were there ; one of them was writing, the other chanting in a low tone certain chapters of the Koran. It is difficult to imagine a Turk being invited to wait in the orderly room of an English barrack where one captain was preparing army forms whilst another sang psalms ! As soon as the commander was up he saw me. He was a charming man and at once gave me the escort I required ; he told me that I might take as many men as I liked though five would be enough.

Having finished my business I saw what there was to be seen in Deir. It is a curious place with narrow streets, varying from three to ten feet in breadth, in an almost unparalleled state of filth. On the north side of the town

a new bridge has been erected across a branch of the Euphrates; it is well built and is a very creditable piece of work, but the road across it leads to nowhere in particular. The modern town is only some twenty years old and is one of the very few instances of a "boom town" in Asia. Its rapid growth is due to the increase of the caravan trade, several routes intersecting here. The population consists largely of Armenian exiles, broken-down muleteers, and the refuse of Arabia and Turkey.

CHAPTER IV.

DEIR TO BAGHDAD.

I STAYED at Deir a clear day and started again the second morning after my arrival at seven o'clock. As the muleteers had had a day's rest they were particularly lazy and somewhat mutinous; but the persuasions of my escort, who threatened to use a cowhide whip if they did not hurry up, were effectual. I had a sergeant and four men with me. The sergeant was at Urfa during the massacres, speaking of which he said :—" One day our captain called us out and told us that the wives of some Moham-medans had been tortured by Armenians. We were ordered to find the Armenians and kill them and we did kill all we met. Next day we were told to kill some Kurds in a village near. But our captain would then do no more and I was sent here."

We stopped at Meyádín where I visited a ruined castle. The native story is that it was built by the Jews and subsequently destroyed by 'Ali, who put its inhabitants to the sword as they would not embrace Islam; but what

antiquarians may say on the subject I do not know. Next day brought me to what is left of Sálihiyya. The immense outworks of the ruined town are visible two hours before it is reached and then appear to be about a mile away. The ruins were extremely interesting.

When I reached the next stopping place I found a battle royal in progress between Omar the chief muleteer, Jacob the waiter and Michael the cook, who had preceded me. Omar was stretched upon the ground hurling the vilest epithets at the waiter and the cook. As far as I could make out there was no reason for this disturbance except that Jacob had moved a tent rope. I explained that this sort of thing could not continue in the camp, but if they wished to fight they might do so at a distance of two hundred yards. The waiter and the cook said they did not wish to fight which was not surprising considering Omar's physical proportions—he is six feet two in height. Omar however would not leave the camp and continued to challenge, curse, and swear in his harsh and unpleasing voice. I told him that if he did not go away I should make him; whereupon he rose up, struck the dragoman in the face, and made a rush at me. Dodging him, I beckoned to the escort who

took him by the scruff of the neck, bound him hand and foot and took him inside the *nhota*. Presently he sent to say that he was very sorry and had not meant to attack me ; so I said that he might be liberated and brought to my tent where I told him that it must not occur again and forgave him. About two o'clock in the morning I was aroused by a fearful scuffling and fighting outside my tent which continued for some time. I looked out and was told that a hyaena, or some other wild beast, had come into the camp and seized one of the muleteers by the leg, but had been tackled and put to flight by my dog Barud. The story may have been true, for the muleteer's trousers were certainly very much torn about the ankles.

The following day I camped at Abu Kemál. One of my escort put his mare to feed in a field of standing corn which annoyed me very much, not the less that I had already paid him for fodder ; and I tried to make him understand that when he accompanied English travellers this sort of thing could not be done. He seemed rather put out and went away. Shortly after he came back with a miserable-looking man who said that he was the owner of the field, and that he very much wished that his great friend the zaptieh should feed his

mare there ; but I told the latter that if he persisted in doing so I should report him to the next kaimakám and have him severely punished. This settled the matter ; the mare was taken out of the field and fed upon chopped straw.

I think I may here venture on a little digression and say something of the gendarme as an oriental-type. From Mustafa Pasha to Akaba, from Kaifa to Mount Ararat he rides, jobs, carries the post, fights and occasionally makes an arrest. He is one of the chief features of the Turkish empire ; but to the greater number of untravelled Englishmen he is quite unknown, even by the majority of tourists in Syria he is little noticed. If he is seen, he is taken for a soldier which he certainly is not ; a quaker could not be more shocked than he would be if you asked him if he were one. And yet what is he ? If you talk of fighting his eyes blaze ; he describes how he and such a pasha killed so many Bedouins and burnt so many of the wounded or brought back so many cattle. He tells you how he alone would fight twenty Bedouins or robbers, and so I believe he would ; for, though he is a lying and bombastic braggart, he is no coward. He feeds his horses on standing corn ; he eats like a hog ; he stands

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before his superiors with hands in his pockets; he gives his opinion on the affairs of the empire; and he slouches through the bazaar with an independent gait—indeed he is the only independent man in Mesopotamia. I have often wondered if the old soldier of fortune of the sixteenth century was like him. His uniform clothes him more or less for it ranges from a hussar jacket and trousers, if emperors have been about, to tatters and four buttons in ordinary times. The government I believe gives him a Snider, or a Remington, a handful of cartridges and its blessing. To this he adds a nickel revolver and, if he is rich, a sword; then mounts his own horse and starts on his business whatever it may be. His nationality is undetermined. He may be a negro descendant of some released slave, one of the felláhín of the Euphrates valley or, as is more generally the case, a Kurd. He is at his best on horseback and his seat is sufficiently graceful. To see him basking in the sunlight before his ruined barrack is not an impressive sight. He sits there on his heels smoking some one else's narghileh, sipping coffee which some friend has brought him, and dispensing wisdom in a raucous voice to the surrounding crowd. His weather-beaten cheeks are covered with

grizzly stubble but how he maintains that stubble is a mystery. I have heard that once a month a zaptieh is shaved, and that after the operation he twines his kafiah tightly round his chin and hides in some cellar until he is respectable. This may or may not be true; certainly no one ever sees him without the stubble, unless of course he wears a beard. I believe that those tattered marauding rovers, with proper officers and weapons, would form a force which might cause even the Tartar of the North to tremble; for they would be as barbarous and as cruel as himself, whilst possessing a dash and gallantry which the Tartar never has shown and never will show. But to continue.

I was about to start next morning at eight o'clock when I met some fifty men, mounted on very good-looking mares, with lances and learnt that there was going to be a jereed; so I stayed to watch it. The play was very creditable and although they were not really Bedouin, but felláhín of the villages, their riding was not ungraceful and they were adepts in the use of the lance. The game of course seemed to a stranger to have no fixed rules and to be merely wild careering over the country, mixed up with the performance of

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feats of horsemanship ; such for instance as riding on a wooden saddle, without any girths, at full gallop towards an opponent and then stopping short when within a couple of yards of him. After watching this performance for an hour and a half I left and rode on to El-Kadím where I camped. I found a large Persian caravan, bound on a pilgrimage, already there. The people were interesting but fluent liars of the first order. From three different people I received the following answers as to the distance between Baghdad and Teheran. The first said it was twenty-two, the second forty, the third thirty days' journey. I was also told that the weather they had had was beautiful ; that there was snow ten feet deep all the way ; and that there was continual rain. As to the road one said that it was a railway ; another a carriage road ; a third a mule road ; one man even averred that there was no road at all. One of the muleteers, who was certainly the ugliest man I have ever seen in Asia, sat in my kitchen tent and described to me the road between Baghdad and Mosul which it was my intention to traverse. He began by telling me that many, very many, Europeans made use of it every year, perhaps some three thousand ; but when pressed he

modified this and said that he had known two European gentlemen go by it two years before. He went on to say that it was fearfully dangerous; that no one had ever travelled by it and lived; that, in fact, one Kurd from that country would rob a caravan of five hundred bold men like himself! Certainly the Cretans are not the only liars in the East!

Next day we met a number of Persian pilgrims on the march, and were told that if, as we proposed to do, we camped at El Nehye we should certainly be robbed. We camped there all the same and fortunately found that the Persian was a false prophet. At this place the scenery underwent a complete change; palm trees abounded and the country generally appeared more fertile. On February 14th I arrived at 'Anah, the first place of any importance after Deir, and found that it consisted of one street, which appeared to me to be at least two miles long. Its inhabitants have that strikingly dignified air of philosophical abstraction which, in orientals, generally seems to hide inborn laziness and crass stupidity. I visited the kaimakám and he returned my call; he was very hospitable and gave me some useful information as to the condition of the roads. At 'Anah my five soldiers took their leave and

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I received in exchange two zaptiehs with whom I set off in the morning. I noticed after leaving 'Anah more *naouras* and some signs of irrigation. At Hama some people joined my caravan for the sake of the protection afforded by the zaptiehs.

Next day as I was riding to Jibba I had an adventure. About two hours after luncheon we saw, a mile and a half away, a man on horseback, with a Bedouin lance, followed by fourteen others on foot with guns. My one gendarme (the other was with the mules) became somewhat excited and told us we had better ride off the track; so we cantered off the road and stopped about five hundred yards away on the left. The zaptieh loaded his rifle and covered the strangers; I did the same with my rifle; so did the dragoman with his revolver. As they had only got flint-lock guns we were well out of their range; but they were not out of ours. I think they appreciated this for the gentleman on horseback stopped and shouted out that he would not touch us. I subsequently learnt at Baghdad that these men were from the Anezeh; they were I believe then going to fight the Shammár Arabs, as at that time there was a feud between the two tribes. When these fellows are on such an expedition as this they do not hesitate to rob anyone that comes

in their way ; and they would probably have robbed us if we had not acted as we did.

The following day I was accompanied by fifty persons who joined my caravan for the advantage of the escort. That night at Hít I was aroused about ten o'clock by a perfect fusillade from the gentry who were camped next me ; on enquiry I found that there was nothing the matter but that it was their custom to fire all night long to frighten any possible robbers. I stopped this tomfoolery.

In the morning I cantered on to Ramadi with Jacob, leaving the mules to follow, as I wished to telegraph to the English resident at Baghdad. I found that the wire was broken but the clerk, who was sitting contentedly on the roof of his office, told me that it should be repaired as a mark of respect to myself ; and that, if I waited, I should be able to send a telegram next day. The kaimakám was a Jerusalem man, and he seemed very pleased to see my servants with whom he gossiped for a long time. He called on me in the evening and was highly delighted with my "sparklets," with which I made him three bottles of soda-water which he drank with great gusto. The next stopping place was Falúja where is found the first bridge over the Euphrates. There is

a telegraph wire which crosses the river but there is no telegraph office; the only official in the place is the collector of tolls who dozes most of the day on the bridge; there are no troops; and there is no station of police within twenty miles of the bridge. There is therefore nothing to prevent any number of people crossing it, though, as I have said, one of the reasons for the maintenance of the military posts between Meskenah and Ramadi is to prevent the Anezeh Arabs from crossing the river. Truly the ways of the Unspeakable are inscrutable!

I left Falúja a little before four o'clock in the morning as it would take about fourteen hours to reach Baghdad. On the way I met a caravan of some five hundred military students who were going to Constantinople. Their luggage was very odd; a mixture of Saratoga trunks, band boxes, parrots in gilded cages, dates, palms, in short every conceivable thing that any ordinary person would rather be without on a long journey. About three hours before we reached Baghdad the golden mosque appeared in the distance in the midst of a cluster of palm trees, and to us, coming from the desert, the effect was very beautiful and inspiring. In due course we reached the graveyard which lies outside every Mohammedan town; then the octroi;

and then we entered the narrow streets of Baghdad through which we passed, my escort pushing everyone aside with the arrogance which is usually shown by military police.

The first thing which struck me was the cleanliness of these streets. I make no doubt that to anyone coming straight from Europe they would appear filthy but as compared with Aleppo, for example, they are spotless. Half an hour after passing the octroi the Tigris appeared and on the right hand side we saw the famous L. Lynch steamers surrounded by *gúfars* or coracles, which spin merrily between the shipping. Arab stevedores and porters scurried to and fro with bales of goods while solemn officials filled up forms and accepted the gratuities that were offered to them. A little lower down, moored beside the British residency, was the *Comet*, a dapper little gunboat of the Indian marine. As I passed through the bazaar and saw her Gatlings shining in the distance, I wondered how many people in England knew that we had a military post and a gunboat at Baghdad, where British interests are watched over by a "political resident" instead of by a consul. I wondered, too, what use would be made of them in the event of a Muscovite invasion of Turkey; but this time will probably show.

CHAPTER V.

BAGHDAD TO MOSUL.

I SPENT a very pleasant week in the house of the English resident, who would not hear of my going to an hotel, and then started for Trebizond. The country outside Baghdad is cut and channelled in every direction by immense ditches which make travelling very difficult. The villages remind one of those of Egypt but are not so well built and naturally are not so prosperous. Three days' journey from Baghdad brought me to Ma'arret Iba. Here there is a small lake, stocked with teal and other waterfowl, which is a perfect paradise for sportsmen. But Ma'arret chiefly interested me as being the first place where I had seen breech-loading rifles carried openly. All down the Euphrates valley what weapons there are are either percussion fowling pieces or Bedouin flint-locks; but here the Kurdish influence commences and with it superior weapons, and for the first time I saw the home-made Martini-Henry. This is manufactured at Soleimaniye where, I was told, from ten to twenty rifles can

be turned out in a day ; and some of them are said on good authority to drift to the north west frontier of India. The Soleimaniye rifle is curiously constructed. Its makers have taken as their model the Martini-Peabody American patent, with which weapon the fifth and sixth army corps are still armed ; but they have chosen for their bore that of the Russian Bourdan rifle. Of course it is not a first-class weapon but the specimens I tested were fairly reliable up to five hundred yards. The eastern mind appears in the sighting. In some of the rifles the back sights were flat pieces of steel with apertures drilled through them at the intervals, which is the old Circassian method. Writing of this reminds me that I once saw at Jerash an old Circassian barrel with a Soleimaniye Martini action fixed to it. All the cartridges for these rifles are of Russian manufacture which perhaps may suggest some ideas to my readers. The Soleimaniye manufactory is not for rifles only. Sometimes I believe the workmen turn out beautiful weapons ; certainly their khanjars are very graceful and neatly finished.

On March 2nd I arrived at Sálihiyya, which is a very prosperous little town with good bazaars and well cultivated fields. When I arrived I called upon the kaimakám to ask

for an escort and he sent me to an official who was to travel by the same road as myself the next day. This official in turn sent me to the military officer; he sent me to his subaltern; and the subaltern sent me back to the kaimakám by whom, after I had drunk seven official cups of coffee and smoked four official cigarettes, I was given my escort.

The following morning I started with the official whom I had seen the night before. He was formerly one of the instructors in the military school in Constantinople, and spoke French very well indeed. He was going to Kerkúk with his wife, eight servants, and about a dozen mules loaded with baggage. At Khurmati we heard that the Kurds were becoming very troublesome and that they had cut up a large Persian caravan, killed sixteen men, and stolen two hundred horses. There must have been something in this, as later on we passed some horses being taken back to Baghdad to be given over to the Persian consulate there.

After we had ridden for four hours or so I noticed, about a quarter of a mile off the road, a very inviting little cave, in a hill side, in which I decided to lunch. We had hardly begun to eat when the zaptieh with us sud-

denly loaded his rifle and jumped up. Looking to see what was the matter I saw a man with a rifle crouched behind a rock a couple of hundred yards away. A minute later another man came, apparently from nowhere, and sat beside him; then, from different parts of the valley, another half dozen appeared. The soldier spoke to the dragoman and everything was packed up and we were off again, ignominiously scampering to the road, in less than two minutes; this was a great feat, for it usually took a quarter of an hour to pack up after luncheon. This incident showed me how easily one might be surrounded in broad daylight in a place where very little cover is to be seen.

The following day I arrived at Kerkúk about an hour before the rest of my caravan. I called on the pasha and managed through a merchant who spoke Arabic to explain to him who I was and what I was doing. He was very obliging and invited me to dinner that evening, and I gladly accepted his invitation. When my tents arrived they were pitched in the courtyard of the pasha's house. At dinner, besides the pasha and myself, there were the pasha's son, the merchant of whom I have spoken, and two officials; and they were all

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considerably astonished when I made my appearance in evening dress. The dinner was an excellent one comprising roast lamb, mashed pumpkins, a green vegetable which I could not distinguish, and minced kebáb; the only drinks were plain water and a kind of molasses made of raisins which was very sweet and sickly. During the meal my servants sat on the floor outside.

The following day I rode round the town of Kerkúk and had an amusing little adventure at a certain mosque of 'Ali, on the north side of the town, which had a curious leaning minaret which I was very anxious to photograph. I asked permission from the sheikh but he, being a very fanatical gentleman, would not give it. I therefore begged that, if I might not photograph the minaret, I might at any rate have the honour of photographing its sheikh; this rather pleased him and he consented to allow me to take his photograph. So I put him under the minaret and photographed them both together but unluckily after all the photograph was a failure. The people who live round this mosque are very lawless and fanatical, and they are a thorn in the side of the government. When therefore the pasha heard that I had ridden to that side of the town, only ac-

accompanied by my dragoman, he sent four mounted horsemen to look after me and they followed as hard as they could gallop. As I rode from the bazaar I saw an individual with a very unamiable expression on his face standing at the door of a shop. When he saw me coming he went inside and then came out again with a revolver at full cock and toyed with it. I had one too so I pulled it out and leant it carelessly over my horse's neck in such a position that it covered him, though apparently unintentionally. He scowled, turned again into the shop, and came back to his former post with a cigarette instead of a revolver.

In the afternoon I called on the commander of the garrison, a Circassian. I was taken all over the barracks and most politely shown everything of interest. The commander not only entertained me very well indeed, but had the band paraded and five tunes played in my honour ; and after I had smoked three cigarettes with him I was taken to what acted as an "ante-room" for the other officers and was entertained by them. The adjutant of the cavalry, who was a Soudanese, evinced great interest in the battle of Omdurman ; and when he heard of the number of killed he licked his lips and smiled a negro's smile.

The following day I left for Altyn Keupru¹ with a kaimakám who was going to Mosul. We started at half past six in the morning with an escort of thirty mounted infantry and five zaptiehs, and about an hour after leaving the town we drew near to the range of hills on the north east of Kerkúk. I was riding alongside the kaimakám and just as we entered a kind of natural amphitheatre, about two thousand yards broad, I was handing him my cigarette case, when I was startled by the buzzing of a bullet somewhere overhead followed by the faint "plop" of a rifle on the hill side. I looked round but the kaimakám took a cigarette out of my case and lit it without saying a word. Two other bullets passed overhead and I made some remark about them; he merely said *Sont des voleurs monsieur*, and it was only after five more shots had been fired that he took any further notice. He then turned round to the soldiers who were riding behind us and pointed towards the smoke on the hill side; they split into two detachments and took the hills on each side, and I went with the left hand one.

¹ My Arab servants called this place Kantara, but Altyn Keupru is usually given in maps. Kantara is Arabic for "a bridge:" Altyn Keupru Turkish for "the bridge over the river Altyn."

The other detachment came across a good many men amongst the rocks and had a little skirmishing. None of our people were hit and I do not think that the robbers were, as they were very difficult to see and galloped among the rocks at great speed. I was much struck by the extraordinary coolness of the escort who seemed to think no more of the matter than a farm boy would of crow-scaring, and, certainly, showed far less interest in what was going on than an English soldier does on a field day. After this little affair we began to get into the range of hills. Everyone who possessed a weapon had to join the soldiers and beat out the two sides of the road in order to avoid an ambush; we rode about a hundred yards apart and so covered about a mile on each side of the bank.

I subsequently learnt that my friend the sheikh of the mosque, whom I had photographed, had repented of giving me permission and wished to put me away; and thinking that I should only have an escort of four or five gendarmes had tried to make things unpleasant. We were told that twelve of his friends followed us for three days; but there was always a large escort so that they never had a chance of showing themselves. If anything had happened to

me I should have only had myself to blame. People who go into countries to which they are not asked and who when there possibly annoy the natives are sometimes surprised if they do not receive a large compensation for any insult that may be offered them; but I see no reason why a traveller, who gets damaged in a country to which he has gone for his own pleasure, and in which he is not wanted, should be recompensed whatever may happen.

From Altyn Keupru to Arbela is a ride of about thirteen hours. On our arrival it was proposed that my camp should be pitched in the local graveyard, an idea which I did not relish; I therefore ordered my muleteers to pitch it about a quarter of a mile outside the town. When this had been done, the kaimakám sent a message to tell me that the place was not safe and that I had better move my tents; but I replied that it was impossible, as it was nearly half past seven, and asked him to send a guard. In about an hour's time some thirty Kurds and eight soldiers appeared. When they arrived I told my dragoman to ask if there were really robbers in the neighbourhood. He asked the chief over whose face a very curious look came as he replied "*There are* many robbers; but by God's will they will not trouble you to-

night." I subsequently heard that he and his men were the principal cut-throats of the town hired by the kaimakám to look after me for the night; and I think this must have been true as they refused any remuneration the next morning. They were all armed with Martini or Bourdan rifles. The chief, an enormous man about six feet six in height, was covered with cartridges and had a large drawn sabre in his hand; his subordinates were some of the most ferocious men it has ever been my luck to set eyes on. They came to the kitchen tent and ate heartily all there was to be found and then proceeded to warm themselves with mastic (which is a kind of aniseed brandy) as the night was cold. When a couple of bottles of this had been put away they stretched themselves all round my tent making a truly infernal noise, whistling, yelling and shrieking the whole night long. They placed twelve of their companions in a circle about three hundred yards away around my tent; the rest remained close up and each in turn howled like a wolf towards his more distant friends who replied with a long whistle. This fiendish noise prevented me from getting much sleep.

The only incident worthy of notice between Arbela and Mosul was crossing the Záb-‘ála by

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ford. The fording boats are large and square and hold six horses or mules and twenty men. Getting mules on board is very difficult as they jib consistently; and the muleteers were very barbarous in their methods of persuasion. In one case they tied the fore-legs together, threw the mule down and dragged him by his head, nearly strangling the poor beast in getting him on board. My eight mules and four horses took about three hours to ferry across; it was almost as difficult to disembark them as to get them on board.

Two days more brought me to Mosul. The first thing that struck me on approaching it was a splendid bridge. It is a fine piece of workmanship and has only one fault; it does not cross the river. The engineer commenced building it about a hundred and seventy yards from the bank; he built twenty-four piers, and at the twenty-fourth came to the water. Then after due consideration he thought that he would build the bridge with boats, and these he chained to the end of the masonry. Though this structure is useless as a bridge, it makes an excellent rendezvous for beggars, lepers and sweetmeat vendors. When I was in Mosul, affairs were hardly in a settled condition. The late walí had died some six months before

and his successor had not been appointed; so there was no one who had the power to license firing on robbers. The result was that two police officers were in prison for having shot robbers in self defence; robberies were committed in broad daylight within five hundred yards of the city walls; after six o'clock the town was in an uproar; and no one ventured out after sundown. Mosul seemed to be less touched by European influence than any town I had yet visited. The bazaars were interesting and the "Brummagem" drummer's usual assortment of slop-shop articles were not so painfully obtrusive as they were at Baghdad. France has a consul at Mosul but for some reason, not obvious at first sight, our government thinks that a place of this importance is best served by a consular agent. The gentleman who now fills that post is a native Christian named Nimrod Rassam; he is said by the natives to be Nimrod's uncle sent by the English to look after the ruins of Nineveh!

CHAPTER VI.

MOSUL TO BITLIS.

I TOOK a house in Mosul and stayed there for five days leaving it on March 16th for Taladas, where I stayed one night, and then went on to Taeletzeit, where the first casualty occurred—one of my mules became dead lame and had to be disposed of. The ride from Taeletzeit to Zakhú is pleasant; one leaves the monotonous flat country behind and comes into the rocky and wooded mountains of Kurdistan, the great snow peaks of Mount Júdí appearing when you reach the summit of the Zakhú pass. At Zakhú I was visited by the Chaldean catholic bishop who spoke French very well. He told me that he had seen no European there for the last four years excepting the superior of the dominicans who had passed that way about five months before.

From Zakhú to Nahrawan we had a short ride in pouring rain and crossed two swollen rivers with great difficulty. At Nahrawan the officer who was with us told us that it was a dangerous place so we had rather an uneasy night; I slept

in my clothes and my servants did not sleep at all. That day we passed a camp of the Yazidi, or devil worshippers, and I rode into it greatly to the disgust of the officer. As it happened all the men were away; only the women and small children were in the camp. They are an evil race and look every inch as bad as they are said to be. Their tents are very curious; they are surrounded with a kind of reed thatch, and the roof is made of the black Bedouin stuff.

From Nahrawan we started for Jezírah and after two hours riding we came to a river which was utterly impassable on account of the heavy rains. We were therefore obliged to wait two days until it had to some extent subsided; and even then we had great difficulty in crossing. One man was actually carried off his legs and borne a hundred yards down the stream; but luckily he was caught and pulled out none the worse for his ducking. That day thirty villagers accompanied us for the protection of my escort, which consisted of three zaptiehs and a lieutenant. On our way we crossed a bridge which spanned a roaring torrent; it was only a yard in width, there was no railing of any kind, and the river ran thirty feet below. I must confess that crossing it was creepy work, but it had to be done. I

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noticed some sticks and weeds which had been driven into the bridge, showing that the day before it had been completely covered. We stopped for luncheon on the other side. When we had been there about half an hour, eight men, all armed with rifles, crossed the bridge, three on horseback and five on foot ; they passed us quickly and hurried on the road up a defile that the mules had followed. I had sent one soldier on with the baggage. The officer said that these men were hamidieh and very likely after our mules thinking probably that there was no escort with them ; and he thought it advisable that we should follow, so we packed up and rode after them, but they had got about ten minutes' start.

We rode straight up the valley and saw no signs of them. We then turned sharply to the left, and found that the road was about six feet broad with a perpendicular cliff on one side and a perpendicular drop on the other. This road or pathway went straight into the sun's eye. When we were half-way up the hill, at the top of which the road turned to the left, a man crept round the corner, at the top, knelt down on the road, and placed his rifle at his hip. Another followed him and yet another until there were five men kneeling across the road with rifles

pointed in our direction but not presented. We were riding in single file. The officer was in front, I next, my dragoman third ; then came the muleteer with the luncheon, and then the remaining soldiers of the escort. The officer leant over on his horse and drew his revolver ; I did the same and also loaded my rifle. 'Isá's sight had been affected by the dust and he could see nothing at all. The muleteer who was riding behind moaned gently to himself ; but what the two soldiers did I cannot say as they were too far away. The remaining three or four hundred yards were the longest and most unpleasant I have ever ridden ; we did not know whether the men would fire and we could not touch them until they did. This would give them the advantage of the first shot and, as I have said, we had the sun straight in our eyes. However the officer rode on neither increasing nor slackening his pace, and we followed. When we arrived at the place where they were sitting we rode between them ; and as we passed they unloaded their rifles. I did likewise and held up the cartridge between my finger and thumb, at which they grinned and walked away. We saw the three horsemen riding in the direction of the baggage, but, when the officer of the escort shouted some-

thing, they turned to the left and took another road to their village. We rode as fast as we could and in about a quarter of an hour reached the muleteers, who had seen and heard nothing of all this. I subsequently heard two or three shots fired in the hills but cannot tell whether they had anything to do with us.

We arrived at Jezírah about four o'clock in the afternoon and found that the bridge of boats by which the river is generally crossed had been unchained and moored on the other side owing to the rising of the waters. The passage of the river at Jezírah is very difficult at flood time, as the currents are very strong at the junction of the two rivers which form the Jezírah or peninsula. It is therefore necessary to tack up the main branch crossing the river to the point of division and then down the smaller arm ; and it was consequently late when the ferry boat reached us. The passage took two hours each way, so I did not cross myself but sent the cook to buy food and the dragoman to fetch an escort. It was necessary to obtain a fresh escort as we had passed from the viláyet of Mosul to that of Diarbekr : but, as Jezírah is only just across the boundary and is in a remote corner of the viláyet, the buruldi I had received at Mosul sufficed for the purpose.

When he came back, at the end of five hours, 'Isá told me that he had been asked with regard to myself, "Is this one bey, or basha?" and that he had replied, with unintentional humour, "This no bey, no basha, but gentleman." He also told me that there were three German archæologists in the town. One of these gentlemen, Dr. Belck, had met with a mishap among the hamidieh near Van; so that now wherever they went they took thirty soldiers with them and, 'Isá was told, gave them no baksheesh—the upshot of which was a general fall in German prestige. Later on I heard the story of Dr. Belck in more detail. I was told that he went into the mountains only accompanied by hamidieh who, after they had gone some distance, presented their rifles at him and made him hand over his revolver and other belongings. This done they began to shoot at him and one shot took effect in his ear. With great presence of mind he threw himself on the ground and pretended to be dead. The hamidieh, seeing the blood, thought they had killed him, and, leaving him lying on the ground, went away. He managed to get to Van and clamoured for ten thousand pounds—but without success. After a shipwreck on Lake Van, of which I shall tell the story in

due course, I had to do with some hamidieh of the tribe to which Dr. Belck's assailants belonged, but, I am thankful to say, my experience of them was very different from his.

I proposed starting at four o'clock the following morning as we had a ride of twelve hours before us; but this was rendered impossible by the escort not arriving till half past eight. That day the scenery was beautiful; some of the defiles of the rivers rivalled those of Burmah. We were in the mountains and the higher we went, the colder of course it got; roads were non-existent, and the tracks were impassable for anything but mules. When night came on heavy clouds gathered round, and soon rain began to fall heavily; I was then forcibly reminded of that magnificent description of advancing cavalry in Mr. Rudyard Kipling's story *The Lost Legion*. This was even more strongly borne in upon me when a mule fell amid a shower of sparks; the high shrill voice of a watchman wailed across the darkness *Yá-m-a-h-m-ú-d*; and an answering cry, followed by a whistle, came, seemingly, from miles away.

It was bitterly cold and I looked forward to a hospitable reception by the mudír when we reached Funduk, only to find that that village

had no mudír, not even a sheikh. I was taken to a house and into a filthy room about twenty feet square in which not fewer than thirty people were collected. A brushwood fire was burning in the middle; and, in my honour, more and more brushwood was thrown upon it, till I was literally smoked out. The villagers were Chaldean Christians, fierce-looking fellows and all armed. I was told that during the Armenian massacres the Chaldeans helped the Mohammedans; certainly I heard of no instance of a massacre of Chaldeans.

The following day we started at about half past four and commenced one of the most splendid rides I have ever had. Overhead was a blue sky, below, the vegetation, such as it was, was green as an emerald. We were among high mountains, whose ruggedness was relieved here and there by clumps of stunted trees. There was snow on the peaks, and down the sides of the mountains streams rushed frantically. The scenery was indeed impressive though, occasionally, the dangerous nature of the path lessened the pleasure it gave. We rode along the river bank, and now a raft would come swirling down laden with men and merchandise, now a couple of goatskins tied together with a man lying flat on top of

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them. In one place we had to pass a very rickety patched-up bridge. Across this bridge my mules had to be dragged and, with their natural perverseness, they incontinently jibbed in the middle. 'Isá when crossing missed his footing and only by the greatest good luck I caught him by the band of his ulster. Even now it makes me shudder to think of what might have happened to him; for there was a drop of forty feet into a river running like a mill race towards the mass of rocks over which it fell.

The following day I rode to Sert, crossing the river by a ferry, a risky business which entailed a delay of four hours. At the ford I met a dominican prior who was going to Jezírah for Easter. He was travelling with one servant and was escorted by a zaptieh. I had a pleasant talk with him on the river bank, where we smoked a couple of cigarettes before riding off in our different directions. Whilst we were crossing, two young Kurds, veritable artful dodgers, managed to steal the bells from the necks of my mules, but the bells were missed and the boys were caught. They admitted that they had stolen them and showed us where they had buried them; so I had them chained up, intending to take them on to Sert with me. Their old Fagin of a father however came up

and interceded for them and I let them go ; but, first of all, I had them soundly whipped and then insisted that their father should repeat the operation. We waited to see this done. I hope that the effect will be lasting and that I have earned the blessings of other travellers who may pass that way.

Four hours after leaving the ford the town of Sert came in sight. On arriving at this place I called on the pasha, who was very obliging and offered me lodging in his house ; but as there was a very excellent camping ground I did not avail myself of his kind offer. The following day I spent in Sert. The bazaars are very interesting, nearly all the articles being not only of native manufacture, but manufactured on the spot. I saw some khanjars being made and the imitation damascening applied. This is done by clamping the knife upon a stone and rubbing it with a mixture of, I believe, vinegar and chalk which produces a chemical action on the steel exactly resembling damascening. I bought several things very cheaply — as I did not take my dragoman. I simply chose what I wanted and mentioned the price I would give and then my escort persuaded the merchant that my price was the right one. Here I saw for the first time

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the mountain Kurd in his full costume which is very striking. After leaving the bazaar I saw the two battalions which are stationed here drilling ; their equipment was very good indeed, as compared with the average of Turkish soldiers, and they were armed with the Mauser rifle lately imported from Germany, but their drill could only be described as fair.

Next morning I started for Varkhan which is about thirteen hours from Sert. The scenery is very fine but during the latter part of the day its effect was somewhat marred by the fact that we were riding through deep snow. The village of Varkhan proved to be practically non-existent and neither fodder nor food was to be found there. As I saw that the road was difficult, and I wanted to get into Bitlis early the next morning, I started at midnight. The ride down to Khandokan though very beautiful was rough, but afterwards we came upon the great highway which the Turks are making. It is most extraordinary and resembles a railway rather than a road, as there is no ballast of any kind ; there is a series of curves, deep cuttings, and embankments, but there is no sign of any attempt to make a road, though it could be done with very little trouble. Going along it we reached two most extraordinary tunnels

through the rock, one above the other; the lower one was cut when they were making the new highway, but the upper one is said to have been bored by order of Semiramis. As we proceeded we saw more and more snow; at one spot an avalanche had swept away the road which necessitated our making a detour. About two hours before we reached Bitlis, snow became very deep indeed, and as no road had been cut we had to drag our mounts through it. We reached the outskirts of Bitlis at about a quarter past one in the afternoon, instead of in the early morning as I had wished. At first sight the town seemed to be almost European, its houses being well built of cut stone, with doors and windows and one or two with a pitched roof; and even in the matter of dirt it was less bad than most oriental towns. I found that there was no English consul and was astonished to hear from an Armenian preacher of the American mission that he was acting as consular agent or in some such capacity. I do not know whether he spoke truly; I can only say that there is no mention of him in the *Foreign Office List*.

The mention of this Armenian preacher reminds me that I now came face to face with the ghastly Armenian question. From my

subsequent experience of them, I feel such an intense prejudice against Armenians that I am certain that anything I might say would only be biassed and therefore not worth reading; and I think anyone who has had dealings of any kind with this abominable race would probably be in the same position. The Armenian inspires one with feelings of contempt and hatred which the most unprejudiced would find it hard to crush. His cowardice, his senseless untruthfulness, the depth of his intrigue, even in the most trivial matters, his habit of hoarding, his lack of one manly virtue, his helplessness in danger, his natural and instinctive treachery, together form so vile a character that pity is stifled and judgement unbalanced. I cannot believe, as some urge, that his despicable personality has been produced merely by Turkish tyranny. There are other nations who have been tyrannized; the Bulgarians, the Druses, and the Maronites. But not one of them shows a tithe of the abominable qualities which mark off Armenians from the rest of mankind. Even Jews have their good points but Armenians have none; perhaps the educational labours of the American missionaries may produce some good effect. All one can say is *Inshallah*.

CHAPTER VII.

BITLIS TO VAN.

WHEN I arrived at Bitlis, I found that it was impossible to get to Trebizond and that I should have to go to Van instead. I found too that the only way to reach the lake of Van was by man-sledge so that I should be obliged to part with the muleteers who had accompanied me from Damascus. I was sorry to part with them; and they, when they heard that they could not accompany me any further, set up a general howl, and flung themselves weeping on the necks of the dragoman, the waiter, and the cook. The Armenians present were greatly astonished at this, for the muleteers were Mohammedans and the others Christians; and when they saw the head muleteer Omar kiss 'Isá three times on each cheek and then on the forehead and chin they were astounded.

The snow was now thawing and it was necessary to travel at night; as then it froze and the frost made the snow bear. I left Bitlis at half past eleven on March 26th, a beautiful moonlight night, with fifteen sledges, each of

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which carried about a hundred pounds' weight of baggage. That evening one of my servants, who shall be nameless, thought it necessary, as he was going to have a cold ride, to drink a bottle of mastic. When he got outside into the frosty air he began to feel cheerful and commenced throwing snowballs at the others with loud cheers. He soon grew quieter and fell off his sledge a helpless mass on the ground, where he lay weeping because, as he said, "He was so sober and everyone else so drunk." We picked him up, tied him face downwards on his sledge, covered him with blankets, and proceeded on our journey.

The strength of the men who drew the sledges must be extraordinary as they kept up a pace of about three and a half miles an hour. They mounted steepish hills with only raw hide lashed under the soles of their feet, and they only rested for five minutes or so every three-quarters of an hour. The heavy breathing of the sledge-draggers, the gentle zipping of the sledges as they passed over the snow, the occasional moaning of the drunken man, and the stamping of the cold feet had such an effect on me that a couple of hours after leaving Bitlis I was fast asleep. When I awoke I saw a glorious sunrise; the red flush of the sun on

the waters of Lake Van, which were just visible, was beautiful indeed. About seven o'clock we reached Tatwan a squalid village, on the lake, with about a hundred inhabitants. On our arrival the unfortunate mastic-drinker was untied and laid groaning on his back, in which position he remained without moving for an hour and a half—having had a salutary lesson in temperance.

In the little land-locked harbour I found three vessels all manned by Armenians and belonging to them. The owner of the first one asked ten napoleons to take me to Van; the second man demanded the same price; but the third, whose boat was somewhat better than the others, only asked seven. Even this price was exorbitant, but I was obliged to pay it; so I had my baggage placed on board this boat, which was named the *Jámi*. She was about the size of a fifty ton fishing smack; was almost flat-bottomed; and was caulked with pitch on the outside and cow-dung within. She was half decked and rigged in a way that I have never seen before or since. A square sail was rigged on a large yard, consisting of several pieces of unplanned wood lashed together, which was suspended by a line passing through a hole in the mast, no sheaves being considered

necessary. Tacking on a boat like this was almost an impossibility, as the sheet was the only solid thing in the whole ship and this was so contrived that it was impossible to let it go. The only way of going about was to let the yard and sail down bodily, then to push them round when on deck and haul them up again; not a very workmanlike business. Reefing was effected by twisting the sail at the bottom into a bunch and at the same time taking it in at each extremity of the yard. The rudder was a cranky affair of enormous size but little strength. There was a forecastle in the bows in which the crew slept in bunks very like those on an English fishing smack. The boat was provided with badly made sweeps which were of little or no use. The mast was sprung in many places and patched with little clumps of iron nailed here and there. Round the step of the mast three large bags of sand were placed in order to make it firmer. Two gang planks each the length of the boat were drawn in and served to make her a little more encumbered than she already was.

There were two other passengers; an Armenian who had, I believe, turned Mohammedan, and a Jew. We started with a fair breeze about ten o'clock in the morning, and the

captain said that if it continued we should be at Van in six hours. However, two hours after leaving Tatwan, the wind dropped and we were becalmed. About this time I looked at the barometer and saw that it was falling rapidly, which it continued to do until eight o'clock. I told the captain that very bad weather was in store for us, but he smiled and told me that he knew the lake better than I did. I said no more, but an hour later, much to the annoyance of the crew and my servants, I insisted that the kitchen fire should be put out and the stove, which was filled with red hot charcoal, extinguished. I then went to bed after having told the dragoman that if the wind should change in the night he was to wake me. I awoke about half past eleven and felt the boat rolling very heavily; on striking a match, I found about two feet of water in the cabin. With great difficulty I opened the door and getting outside found a cloudy sky and a heavy sea running with white-crested waves. 'Isá was moaning feebly in the corner; my other servants were helpless with seasickness; the other two passengers were alternately praying and weeping; and the crew sat about in dismal heaps. The sail luckily had split under a violent squall; and the

yard with great difficulty had been let down. The tiller had been left to look after itself and was wagging fretfully in the air. The sand bags, that I mentioned as stepping for the mast, had fallen over to the lee side of the boat taking her over to an angle of about twenty-five degrees. The *tout ensemble* was not cheering.

I wanted 'Isá, as he seemed the least unnerved, to help me get the ballast straight, but I found him quite childish, and he only screamed, "Why you bring me to this debil country? I say bad word for the day I came with you; rubbish boat, rubbish captain, rubbish sea; I say bad word for the religion of this lake!" Then as the boat took a particularly heavy roll he stood on his feet with a cry of "Our God He help us" (the *us* being prolonged into a perfect scream) and then collapsed on the side of the boat and lay there vomiting and praying. I managed, although very seasick, to get the ballast fairly straight and to lessen the list of the boat; and then I had to stand on guard over it, for it required continual attention because of the heavy roll and the washing of the water underneath. The tiller I had to leave to itself. Of course in a boat that is caulked with pitch, water, once it

begins to make its way in, increases the leak, especially if the boat happens to be rolling; and the water had certainly risen an inch in the half hour I had been up. The captain was in a fearful state of mind, being torn by the thought that he might lose his boat, his money, even his life; and the crew were so inert that I had to kick sufficient energy into one to make him bail a little of the rising water. So commenced one of the most dismal vigils I have ever kept.

When the sun rose the Jew shook himself a little and on seeing the sea solemnly blasphemed, spat at the sky, and shook his fist at the water. The Armenian renegade was too frightened even to do this and contented himself with occasionally crying out *Allah*. At ten o'clock in the morning the captain hoisted his sail again, having it reefed in the peculiarly clumsy fashion I have described. An hour later we drew near to a cliff rising some eighteen feet out of the water and fronted by a series of rocks to a distance of about five-and-twenty feet from its base. As we were rapidly drifting on to these rocks I kicked the captain and pointed out what was about to occur. He became frantically excited; jabbered and screamed to the rest of the crew; and let go

his anchor, which of course dragged on the rocky bottom though it may have retarded our progress to some extent. I then noticed a number of Armenians sitting in a row on the top of the cliff; they had a rope with them but would do nothing and regarded neither our prayers nor our curses.

I could see a little village about a mile and a half away down the coast and from it there came a horseman at full gallop, who reached us when we were about twelve yards from the first rock, off which we were fending ourselves. This man was dressed in a kind of drab coat with brass buttons, which reminded me very much from shape and cut of "Mr. Gentleman Joe," and on his head he had a Turkish cavalry cap. He caught the rope from the nearest Armenian, twirled it round his head like a lariat, and threw it out to us; then with the help of a stout whip, made the Armenians tow us down the coast. Before the towing had begun we had already bumped four times, and had sprung a considerable leak in the boat; our rudder too was carried clean away. Whilst the Armenians towed we did our best to fend ourselves off the rocks and though we were in a sinking condition we managed to get round the point into a little bay. I shall never forget

the sense of relief I felt when we got into calm water; but it was soon disturbed. Hardly had we rounded the point when the captain, coming to me with open mouth and starting eyes, whispered in my ear "Hamidieh," and, at the same time, rapidly drew his finger across his throat. 'Isá, who had recovered a little, got on his legs and interpreted. He said "this stoopid captain he say this man he help us and soon he kill us. Why you bring me in this debil country?"

When we were made fast four other hamidieh appeared with rifles and, though the recollection of Dr. Belck's experience was not cheering, I decided to go on shore and meet them amicably, as if they intended mischief we should have no better chance if they came on board. I took with me a pair of field glasses, which I had brought for the purpose of baksheesh, and presented them to the man who had rendered us so much assistance. He shook hands with me, nearly breaking the bones of my fingers, and then patting me on the back put me on his horse and led me in triumph to the village, two men with rifles walking behind. As I was not sure of their intentions being friendly the ride was anything but pleasant. I did not like to turn round and

look at them for fear of seeming suspicious ; but I told 'Isá, who was walking in front, to call the man who had rescued me and make him walk alongside. This he did and I, under the pretence of talking to him, continually leant over and got as close to him as possible.

When we arrived at the village, for the first time I entered a Kurdish house ; I saw others later on and may as well give a general description of them here. A Kurdish house has the general appearance of a heap of stones surrounding a tunnel. You dismount ; your horses are led into the tunnel ; and you are motioned to follow. Directly you enter, a thick sweet smell assails you ; such a smell that one sometimes meets with in a badly ventilated cow-shed or a particularly dirty stable. You have to feel your way down this passage, which is dimly lighted and which grows darker at every step till it takes a sudden turn to the right and emerges into a cavernous chamber, in which the smell becomes terribly oppressive. The only light in this room comes from a hole about six inches square at one of the angles in the roof ; this hole also provides the ventilation, though occasionally it is covered by a piece of glass. When this was the case I always had it removed, of course paying for

the damage ; and I should advise any travellers who propose sleeping in one of these places, winter or summer, to do the same. On entering the room you step into pools of filth and blunder against horses and cows, which are tethered promiscuously around the apartment. At the far end are seen, through the dim atmosphere, the columns of what appears to be a gigantic four-poster ; but on closer investigation this proves to be a raised platform, about four yards square, thickly carpeted with felt, on which some ten or twelve individuals may be seated. On this stage is a stove, or sometimes a brushwood fire, which fills the room with thick smoke and makes the atmosphere even fouler than it would otherwise be. When you have removed your boots a seat on the carpet is provided for you. For the first hour you are expected to drink cup after cup of scalding tea without milk or lemon ; then comes coffee ; then for another hour or so you have to answer a series of senseless questions that nearly drive you to desperation. After that you will be left to the fleas who will do their best for your entertainment for the rest of the night.

To return however to my story. When we reached the house we went into such a room about fourteen feet square. At the end farthest

from the door there was a fire of brushwood. Carpets were brought and cushions for me to sit upon; a considerable quantity of fresh fuel was put on the fire; and a large Russian tea urn put there to boil. While the water was boiling, the four hamidieh who were stationed in the village came in. At the same time some Armenians entered, but of course they kept at a respectful distance. When the tea had been prepared, in Russian fashion, five or six lumps of sugar were put into each cup. I was obliged to drink two cups of this nauseous mixture, scalding hot, and thought with regret of the splendid luncheon that awaits one at Calais after a rough crossing. After this a large flat tray was brought, and into it eggs were broken and then fried in oil; flat loaves of bread were dealt out like cards and the feast commenced. After the eggs, of which I devoured a dozen, and the bread had been disposed of, Turkish coffee was made and cigarettes handed round. My host affirmed that the English and Kurds were brothers and some day would fight together against the Muscovite. He had heard a great deal of Fashoda and of Muscat, and for both affairs he expressed great admiration. His story of Fashoda was that the French had landed in Egypt and that they had

a large army, but that the English general had visited them alone and bade them begone; a behest which they promptly obeyed. He had a similar story about Muscat: and I thought these stories were so good that it was unnecessary to make any correction. He also told me that he had heard that a certain Lord "Raspberry" was then staying with the sultan; which I did not understand until I got to Constantinople. As all such news comes by telegraph and is under direct government supervision, it is interesting to note that so small a matter as Lord Rosebery's visit to Constantinople should be known in an obscure outlying village in Kurdistan a fortnight or so after it had taken place.

I learnt that my host was known as Mu-lázim Mustafa Arrah Ibn Arslán Maju of the tribe of Haideranli in the viláyet of Van, belonging to the Kassási of Adeljiwáz. After staying with him for a couple of hours I returned to the boat and, as it was too cold to sleep out of doors, had one of my tents erected on the sandy shore; leaving the pestilential cabin, in which baking operations were taking place on a large scale, to the officers and men of the *Jámi*. Starting for three or four days was out of the question; repairs were necessary and the crew required time to recover their nerve.

About five o'clock Mustafa Arrah joined me with the rest of the hamidieh and informed me that he had come to do guard for the night. I gave him some tea and then asked him if he would care to go on board the boat, which put the captain into a perfect palsy of terror. His terrified unctuousness was a pleasure to see; he trembled from head to foot but clutched the Kurd by the hand and pressed him to go into the cabin, whilst the crew huddled together at the far end of the forecastle. The whole scene suggested a large wolf walking into a monkey's cage.

As I was very tired with the day's operations I went to bed early. Mustafa had a fire made outside the tent and posted three of his men around it; he came inside himself, and slept with his rifle clutched in his hands, his body glittering with cartridges. One of my servants, whom I will not name, was so frightened of this gentleman that he embraced El Islam, and repeated the few Mohammedan prayers he knew under his breath. Mustafa's hamidieh were three of the most unpromising-looking scoundrels I have ever seen; his lieutenant had only one eye and the other two were picturesque bundles of rags, knives, rifles and cartridges.

The following morning Mustafa told me that if I liked he would accompany me to Adeljiwáz, and there we could procure horses and ride to Van. When I proposed starting with Mustafa Arrah, the captain of the boat was seized with a perfect ecstasy of terror, as he was fully persuaded that if I were taken away his throat would certainly be cut; and as my servants point blank refused to accompany me there was nothing to be done but wait for the boat. But as I wished to let the consul at Van know of my position, I wrote a message, in printed English, and despatched it by a hamidieh to Adeljiwáz, where Mustafa told me there was a telegraph station. In about nine hours he returned with the paper, and underneath my message was written, *Cher Excellence, Je ne comprende pas l'anglais si vos tres depeche est ecrites en francais sera envoyer. Je suis Cher Excellence l'opérateur*; I therefore re-wrote it in French and sent it off again. Another night was spent under the same conditions as before. Next morning some other hamidieh came from neighbouring villages to visit me, and Mustafa proposed a rifle match; so we proceeded to shoot at a sheet of my diary stuck on a rock about four hundred yards away. Before the match was over I saw for

myself what reckless people they are with fire-arms. I went to see how many shots had hit ; and as I was walking back, about twenty yards to the left of the rock, they began shooting again, much to my discomfiture. They were quite satisfied as to my safety because I was out of the direct line of fire.

After four more days, the captain announced that he would like to start and at midnight on April 1st we left Parcat, Mustafa Arrah and the hamidieh all waiting to see us off. The only incident between Parcat and Van was the end of the sail falling overboard and being swept under the boat, through the yard being let down by accident ; an accident which the helpless clowns who formed the boat's crew managed to turn into a delay of four hours. After that, when we were well in sight of Van the wind dropped absolutely, and it was one o'clock before we touched the shore. I asked if the English consul's house was far away and whether it would be necessary to take a horse to reach it. The Armenian passenger, seeing a chance of turning an honest penny, said "No" and offered to lead me to the house. After a brisk walk of between seven and eight miles, I arrived, dusty and parched, at the residence of the English consul,

Captain, now Major, Maunsell, R.A., who was surprised to see me, as the only thing he had heard was that something that called itself English was somewhere near Adeljiwáz. He was very kind and put me up for a week.

Van is a large place and seems to consist of endless miles of mud houses. As a considerable number of the best houses had been destroyed during the massacres, the town was somewhat desolate though, on the whole, it had been made to look fairly decent again. A party of German archæologists were there and meant to stay for some months, and I have no doubt are writing an important work on Van and its surroundings; so I will refrain from any description of the town.

CHAPTER VIII

VAN TO CHENGIL.

I ARRANGED with three muleteers to ride from Van to Igdir in Russia, which they said was a four days' journey. On April 6th I arrived at Artchag, a short distance from Van, and there for the last time I put up my tents. The next day we had to cross some steep mountains to arrive at Kordzot, where I hired a house which was new and therefore clean. Kordzot is an Armenian village and its inhabitants are arrant thieves.

On April 7th I started for Pergri where I was told that the short road to Igdir by Bayazid was closed. My muleteers were very keen to go by it, but the zaptiehs said they would not accompany us, whereupon the head muleteer said he knew of two hamidieh who would take us there for half a napoleon: I remembered Dr. Belck and did not try the experiment. We started from Pergri for Arjish¹ about one

¹ Arjish is the ruined town on the lake of Van from which the inhabitants emigrated to the present town of Agantz when Arjish was flooded by the lake.

o'clock, but although there is an excellent road, as the new mules were very poor walkers, we were unable to make the town before night-fall. My servants were in a state of terror from the ridiculous tales they had heard of the hamidieh, and wished to go back. I knew there was no real danger, but told them if they chose I would take one of the soldiers and gallop on to Arjish and have a larger escort sent out to meet them. This pleased them, but directly I had started they came galloping after me, saying they did not want to be left alone. This made me angry and calling them cowards I drove them back with my whip and left them frightening one another with tales of blood. I reached Arjish just before sun-down and I sent three zaptiehs to meet the muleteers whilst I drank coffee with the commander of the troops. The zaptiehs, instead of going the whole way, sat down in the middle of the road to wait for the arrival of my servants and nearly got shot by Jacob, who was too frightened to ride and was walking in front of the mules with a revolver at full cock in his hand.

I was entertained by the military commander and had a very clean and warm sleeping room in his house, but the waiter and cook who had

slept at the barracks told me that they had been very cold and devoured by vermin. Next morning, snow was falling in enormous flakes, the size of a five franc piece; and it was with great difficulty and many threats, that I persuaded the muleteers to start. About one o'clock in the afternoon I arrived at Arnis a hamidieh village, the people of which were very hospitable. My dragoman and cook distinguished themselves by one of their weekly fights; the dragoman said that he had given the cook a five franc piece to buy some food and that the cook instead of returning proper change had robbed him of two piastres. The cook called Heaven to witness that the dragoman was a liar: the dragoman swore that the cook was a thief, and he would never speak to him again. The dragoman threatened various reportings to Cook's office on his return: the cook threatened counter reportings at the same place. The performance lasted about an hour and a half and I thought it was time to tell them to be quiet, but they would not be quieted. "*Dínak primo ladrone,*" said the dragoman. "*Bestia,*" returned the cook. "*Yá dín wa beládkum,*" "Curse your religion and your country," which as they were both of the same faith and from the same town was rather

a futile form of oath. I asked the dragoman what was the matter and he said "This cook a very debil man and rubbish cook." Eventually it turned out, through the waiter's investigations, that the cook had a hole in his pocket and the piastres were found in his boot. The dragoman said "You see I am really man, I talk really talk, this cook he is debil thief." The cook replied "*In touto gli payesi io non eu veduto un Turguman hak.*" At this juncture they were separated by force and locked up, the dragoman in one room and the cook in another; but they found a crack in the door and continued their arguments and ended by being so abusive that I had to threaten to gag them before they would be quiet.¹

On April 10th we arrived at Patnot, which is the residence of no less a person than the notorious Hasan Pasha. He is the remarkable man to whom the sultan in recompense for his distinguished (?) services gave the rank of brigadier; I believe he has considerable influence amongst the Kurds and he has general command of the Haideranli hamidieh. The village of Patnot is a Kurdo-Armenian village and the houses are filthy in the extreme. I was taken to one of them and told by my escort of zaptiehs

¹ See Appendix, p. 136.

that that was where I should sleep. It was so filthy and seemed capable of hatching so many fleas that I refused to enter, and rode over to a house which was remarkably well built and surrounded by a palisade. This was Hasan Pasha's house and the escort of course objected to my going there as, if I did, there would be no money to be got from a village landlord on their return. I paid no attention to them but rode up to the door, struck it with my clenched fist, and turned round according to custom. It was opened by a Kurd, dressed in a very gorgeous goat's hair jacket with gold facings, who had a beautifully ornamented khanjar in his belt. He led me into a very good room, carpeted with felt and surrounded by a comfortable divan on which he motioned me to sit. Whilst he made tea he told me that Hasan Pasha was away at Adeljiwáz, but that he had heard of my being wrecked at Parcat and had given orders that if I came to Patnot, I was to be entertained. After I had been there about an hour, some villagers came in, on pretence of praying, to have a look at me. In the course of the afternoon the door was thrown open and in strolled a very well dressed young gentleman of twelve or thereabouts, with a Turkish hussar cap on his head and heavy silver belt round his

waist ; he walked very proudly towards me and shook hands in a dignified fashion, then sat on the divan, and called for a cigarette. This was Hasan Pasha's youngest son. Everyone who came into the room made a profound salaam to him and showed him every mark of respect ; he seemed to be a perfect little tyrant in his father's house and it was strange to see these fierce looking Kurds being ordered about and kicked by a child. He stayed an hour and a half with me. Later on I received a visit from one of his brothers who was seven or eight years older ; but he did not seem very bright and certainly had none of the sprightliness and wit of his younger brother. We were left alone at night and were warned not to leave any light in the windows later than two hours after sunset. The doors were all barred on the outside ; and two watchmen were placed at either end of the house. At about ten o'clock the guards commenced walking round the house ; they howled most dismally every quarter of an hour, and their wolf-like howls were apparently answered from ten different places in the village and surrounding hills. The effect was very weird and uncanny.

I left Patnot at eight o'clock the following morning, and before leaving I gave a gilt

Waterbury watch to each of Hasan Pasha's two sons, which pleased them greatly. The roads between Patnot and Toutah, the next post, were in a dreadful state; we had deep snow on either side of us and a miry slushy path to struggle through. If it had been fully frozen snow, it would not have been so bad; but we had arrived just at the commencement of the general break up of the winter's falls, at which time the roads are quite uncertain, and when fording even a small stream one is obliged to probe the bottom before riding into it. This I found out practically, for when fording one my pony suddenly sank and fell; the next thing I knew was that I was being dragged out holding on to the animal's tail. This entailed a complete change of clothing which is a very chilly operation if you are obliged to sit on a snow drift to perform it! However all things pass, and five hours later I was warming my feet in front of a red-hot stove in the house of the commander of the hamidieh in Toutah, a fine tall man, a Constantinopolitan Turk I believe, who expressed great contempt for the Kurds and for Hasan Pasha's regiment. I found him very hospitable; he insisted upon my partaking of his evening meal with him, and though the fare was rough it was very good and satisfying.

The next day was the most awful I experienced during the whole of the journey. For the first three hours the road was only moderately bad; but as we advanced to the mountains the snow got higher and higher, and the sun blazing down burnt all the skin off our faces and inflamed our eyes until the whole universe seemed a mass of green and red spots. As we commenced the ascent, the unfortunate mules fell in heaps every two or three minutes and by the watch we were about two hours and a half going half a mile. We took a little rest at a small hamidieh village on the right of the road, where they gave us sour milk and bread. At the time of our arrival the inhabitants were amusing themselves by a rifle match, which consisted of putting up an egg and shooting at it from a distance of about fifty yards; they occasionally hit it, which showed that they were not bad shots.

When we left this village our troubles recommenced, but we eventually reached the top of the pass. I believe there was a fine view but was not able to enjoy it on account of snow blindness. 'Isá here got palpitation of the heart from the rarefied air and threw himself on the ground gasping, unable to walk any farther. I tried to carry him on my back but the result

was that we both rolled head over heels in the snow; so I got out the medicine chest and gave him a mixture of ginger, brandy and opium, which I find is a very good pick-me-up for orientals, and after a strong dose of this he was able to walk, though not very easily. Once his horse put his foot on the end of his ulster and the poor old fellow, thinking that the horse was breaking his leg, fell screaming on the ground, shrieking "he brake me, he brake me. Mr. Sacks I am brek, I am brek in this debil country." He then got up and solemnly spat in the horse's face. We assured him that there was nothing worse than a hole in his ulster and started again; and I tried to lead the two horses myself. As I was going over what seemed to be a hard snow drift, the crust gave way and all that I realised was that my head and shoulders were underneath a heaving chest and that two grey legs were pounding the snow on either side of me, when the soldier, who was guiding us, very neatly pulled me out from underneath the two struggling horses by my heels. This was bad enough but there are other and worse dangers connected with these drifts; in some places large rivers run underneath the thawing snow and their whereabouts can only be guessed, whilst in others it

is necessary to cross snow bridges which may or may not give way.

I reached Khilikana about seven and the mules crawled in at intervals until ten o'clock when Jacob staggered in, weeping with cold and rage. He fell down in front of the fire in the Kurdish house in which I was staying and lay there for about half an hour doing nothing but moan and cry. The following day, April 13th, I reached Karakilissa, which was only about a three hours journey. Karakilissa shows evident signs of civilisation, having well-built houses and trees planted in its vicinity. The pasha, a native of Smyrna, was a charming man, and certainly one of the most obliging I have ever met. He had a room in the office cleaned and a stove placed in it for me; he also invited me to dinner. The dinner was an excellent one and caviare figured as one of the delicacies. We dined in true Turkish fashion. Before the meal commenced we drank liqueur brandy and ate olives; and when we had been doing this for a couple of hours or so he remarked that if I wanted dinner I was to tell him, as it was their general custom to wait much longer. I told him that for myself I should prefer to wait six hours, but that I had to start very early the next morning and must

therefore go to bed by eleven o'clock. So dinner was hurried on.

The following day I rode to Malhúna. On the way I stopped at Uch Kilissa where I met a very pleasant Turkish subaltern who spoke French well; I had an hour's talk with him and he gave me two cavalry troopers as an escort. At Malhúna, a village about two hours' distance from Uch Kilissa, the colonel of the Persian hamidieh in the Turkish service put me up, by order of the pasha of Karakilissa; he was very hospitable, and before I left he gave me a mule and also a pair of Kurdish socks which had been worked by his son. Next day I rode to Mosúna and that was to be my last night in Turkey. The military commander had only just arrived and his house was not in order, so he was unable to put me up, and I was driven into an Armenian den, crammed with fleas, where for the first time in my journey baksheesh was demanded in large quantities. The house was so filthy that I had to leave at midnight, as sleeping was impossible and it was too cold to stand outside. I arrived at the foot of Mount Ararat just at sunrise, and that sunrise I shall never forget, as by good fortune I was at the correct angle to see the sun come up exactly over the peak,

which was indeed a beautiful and impressive sight. It is only when the mountain practically eclipses the sun that you fully grasp its enormous bulk.

At eight o'clock that morning I arrived at Chengil, the last Turkish post, where fifty men were stationed. Their captain turned them out to present arms as I rode by, and gave me six as an escort. I left the dragoman to pass the baggage at the Customs and rode on alone, and never shall I forget the feeling of regret that came over me when I saw the red-roofed Tartar kennel which marked the limits of that disease known as Russia. When I arrived there a filthy Cossack, whose stench was blown by a gust of wind across the frontier, stopped the Turkish soldiers; and at a little heap of stones which marks the frontier my escort halted, pointed towards the red brick house, held their noses and spat in its direction. I bade them "Good-bye" and watched the last Turk swing round the corner before I rode into Russia.

CHAPTER IX.

CIVILISATION !

INSOLENCE and stupidity greeted me at the first step I made on Russian soil. The greasy sentry that I have already mentioned was sitting in his chair with his rifle across his knees, but when I rode up he came towards me and catching my horse's head, with a porcine grunt, demanded my passport. At that moment a sergeant strolled out and also demanded my passport, which I gave him; after holding it upside down for about five minutes and making a pretence of reading the Russian visa he nodded and handed it back. If this had been a Turkish post food would have been brought and I should have been entertained; but here when I made signs for a glass of water, the man gave me a cup and pointed to a pump. For a moment I was surprised, but then I remembered that I had returned to civilisation and was no longer in Turkey.

I recrossed the frontier and met my mules quite close to the heap of stones where my escort had left me. We then rode on toward

Igdir. The whole country side seemed bristling with a brutal and stinking soldiery; from behind every rock greasy leather-clad Cossacks came out and demanded my passport and cigarettes. At Urigov, where are the first regular barracks on the Russian side of the frontier, the officers were very kind and told me that if I liked to ride on to Igdir that night to get a carriage, they could procure me a change of horses. This I did, though I had now been some eighteen hours in the saddle. We started about six o'clock and after two hours' riding could see the lights of Igdir twinkling in the distance. Suddenly our horses shied violently and the next thing I knew was that a gleaming bayonet was stuck within an inch of my nose. We were told to get off by five evil-looking Tartars, who were patrolling the road; and these insolent fellows pulled the saddles off our horses, took off our coats, emptied out all our pockets, scattered the contents of our saddle-bags about the road, and then commenced lighting matches to look at them. My dragoman did not appreciate this conduct and he cursed them liberally in Italian and Arabic, shrieking out *Rombimente di testi complementi di ladrone mwatak din kull el belad el Muscov din kullu memalikat kaman*;

he added several epithets in Italian which I had better not repeat. But he was stripped and searched. We were each put between a guard of two soldiers, two others walking in front with their rifles slung and with revolvers held aloft; and as if that were not enough they blew whistles and some other devils, worse than themselves, came to their assistance. I was so overcome by the humorous side of the situation that I did not feel angry until they took my cigarette case from my pocket, and not only dented it badly but stole all my cigarettes. Protests were of no use; we were borne off through the streets of the town, taken to the courtyard of some official building and there kept for two hours. I sent in my passport, which was brought back. I then luckily remembered that the Russian consul at Van had given me a cheque to buy him a kodak in England; this I sent in with my Van passport. I think that the gentleman in charge of the police must then have come to the conclusion that I was on very good terms with some Russian official, as our revolvers were returned and we were released, having been delayed and insulted for three hours.

We then fell into the hands of some Armenians anxious to let their carriage which,

as the price did not seem very extortionate, I hired. It was now about eleven o'clock at night. I had to push on to Erivan as I expected to find money waiting for me; so I drove off in the carriage after arranging that two wagons should proceed to Urigov the next morning to fetch my baggage. I had now been riding and walking twenty-four hours at a stretch and naturally felt tired. When I got to the stables where these carriages were kept I was looking forward to seeing a spacious landau in which I might rest, but I was horrified to find a ridiculous little victoria, on which our baggage was piled, in which I had to sit with my chin almost on my knees. The police, as far as I could make out, had appropriated twenty-eight cigarettes; a buttonhook; a five franc piece; a coloured pocket-handkerchief; and a cartridge belt. The thievish Armenians who inhabited the stable stole a revolver; some silver lace; saddle bag ropes; and a bridle. During the whole time I was in the Turkish provinces I lost nothing—it will be remembered that I recovered the bells which the small boy stole at the ford on the way to Sert.

We started from Igdir about midnight, and reached Erivan after a most uncomfortable drive

of eight hours. On my arrival I called on the chief of the police and informed him of the robberies of which I had been the victim : he said he would see about it but did not seem much interested. I went through the farce of calling on him three days running, and at the end of that time called on the governor, who asked why I had not been to him sooner. I said that I had laboured under the delusion that I was in a civilised land, and added that if my pocket were picked in London I should not go to the lord mayor but to the police. Had I thought of it I might have quoted from the *Arabian Nights* and said : " Oh kings of the age, how comes it that I roamed safely in the land of the infidel and am plundered in your realm though it be the abiding place of peace and justice ? " As a post would leave in three days, the governor said that he would write about the affair to the head of the police at Igdir. I then asked him if there was no telegraph ; and he replied that there was, but that such matters were never entrusted to the telegraph department. I had therefore nothing to do but bid him " good-bye " and wait in patience.

At Erivan one comes in touch with a certain amount of European luxury, basted on to Russia. Of course whatever the Russians take becomes

Russian. If Erivan were a town in an English dependency, or an English conquest, there would be a smart European quarter and a dirty native one; a polo ground and a mosque. But here everything is Russian: the language is Russian; the officials are Russian; and the natives have been transformed into Russians. Wandering about I witnessed a curious scene which seemed to me to throw a side-light on the Armenian massacres. In one of the streets leading off the great square there were a couple of Circassians on horseback; one with a gun minus a lock. They were surrounded by about forty yelling Armenians, among whom were ten or twelve who had been drilled by the Russians in the hope of turning them into soldiers. One of the Circassians threw the reins of his horse to his friend, jumped off, and rushed into a house close by. A kind of stage crash was heard within, then the Circassian emerged dragging an Armenian by the cheek and beard. When he had got him outside he beat him on the face; threw him on the ground; and then pommelled his ribs with the butt end of the gun. One of the other Armenians feebly tapped the Circassian on the arm, but the rest hardly moved. I was just going to beg the Circassian to leave off when he sud-

denly turned round and went for the whole crowd ; and then ensued a most comical scene. In less time than it takes to describe, five Armenians were lying on the ground and the Circassian was striding over their bodies, whirling his gun over his head, and scattering the rest like chaff before the wind. He was nearly mad with rage and was foaming at the mouth. He chased them as a terrier will chase a flock of sheep and, like the terrier, he occasionally singled out one to worry. This went on for about ten minutes when being somewhat out of breath and, perhaps, a trifle fatigued the Circassian vaulted on to his horse and rode away with his friend.

After five days' stay in Erivan we left for Akstapha in a post carriage which changed horses every eighteen versts I think. The drive was through very beautiful mountainous country and took us a day and a half. From Akstapha we went, by the Trans-Caucasian Railway to Tiflis, a place which, judged by externals, is almost European. Tarbooshes and turbans were no more to be seen, their places being taken by flat white leather-peaked caps—the outward and odoriferous mark of Russia's presence.

So far as interest was concerned my travels

were now ended. A few hours in the train covered the old five-day caravan journey to Batoum and at the end of another week I was in Constantinople. 'Isá, Jacob, and Michael came to the station and bade me a tearful farewell ; and I feel sure that the sorrow they expressed was sincere. I know that some will scoff at the idea of Syrian servants being really sorry to leave their master ; but we had seen much together and a mutual feeling of respect had grown. Certainly I must confess to a lump in my throat when 'Isá quavered through the window of the parting train : "*Masalaam*. I pray our God He help you always." I can only add *Inshallah*.

APPENDIX.

I.—‘ISÁ KUBRUSLI.

I HAVE already given some idea (pp. 3-5) of my dragoman's opinions of various nations, Western and Eastern, but I think that it is worth while recording at length the judgements of this intelligent and experienced old man, who has been a dragoman for over forty years.

“De more coorious from all de nation Europ'ean is de *Henglish*, because he have many kind, some berry good and some berry bad. Before time de Henglish very different from now, before he was very reech, very strong, and shoot it very good, ride very good, and nice barbe red colour and long, and always his watch made from really gold, in Jerusalem always beforetime we say, ‘All de Henglish is reech and strong, now we know dis is lie-word, becos Jan Cook he bring many very different.

“I like Jan Cook plenty very much, becos he my master, and pay me very good, and give

me plenty busy, but de traveller from Jan Cook dis I not like it becos he is very coorious.

“ One kind traveller from Jan Cook he is de high priest for de Henglish, always closes black color, and face very serioos, dis kind he not like laugh too much, and he hangry for de religion, and his religion coorious, becos he very jealous from de Latin, de Greek, and de Rooshan. Becos dis kind he got de church Saint Sepulchre and de high priest Henglish he not got notin, so he commence, say ‘ Dis is nonsense, dis is not really Holy Sepulchre.’ Den everyone he say dis priest is foolish man ; den de priest Henglish be very hangry, and he say ‘ Dis is not Holy Sepulchre, and I prove it.’ Den he go all round Jerusalem and by-’m-by he find one hill and he say ‘ Dis is Golgotha ;’ den de people say, ‘ Why dis Golgotha ;’ den de priest Henglish he say, ‘ Becos I never say lie-word, and becos I say dis Golgotha.’ Den de Latin, de Greek, and de Rooshan he leave de priest Henglish alone and go ’way ; but de traveller Henglish believe dis nonsense story becos he like have one Golgotha for himself far away from de Rooshan, de Latin and de Greek. And nearest dis Golgotha from de priest Henglish was one *jardin* belong one Christian man from Jerusalem ; and in de

jardin dis Christian man he find one tombs. And becos dis man is my friend he call me and say, 'I find one tombs in my *jardin*; you are dragoman and you like de antiquitee for to sell de traveller, come look it in dis tombs. If you find you keep it, becos you my friend,' and I go to dis tombs wid de master of de *jardin* and we cherche in de tomb and we find many bones, and some piece rag but no antiquitee. Den I say for him, 'Take all dis bone far away; den you go to de Henglish and you say, I find one tombs empty in my garden, perhaps you like look.' Den he say 'yes bery good,' and he do what I tell him; and when de Henglish high priest hear it dis he say 'What I tell you, here is reely Saint Sepulchre and notin inside.' And my friend he sell it de *jardin* good price ha—ha—ha, always we laugh for de Henglish priest and his Golgotha and his Saint Sepulchre.

"Den noder kind Henglish, he is not believe notin; he laugh for everyting and everybody; he call us poor meselable black; and he say everytin is nonsense; and was no God and notin. Dis is de vile; and if many kind Henglish come like dis, den our God He com hangry for you nation, Sir, and He shake down de gouvenoor Henglish and his ship, and his country. But now not many people like dis;

but perhaps some more he come by-'m-bye. Noder kind Henglish I see in Cyprus, becos I was servant for one kaimakám Henglish in dis country when first de Henglish he catch Cyprus for himself. Dis kind Henglish is de soldiers military, and from dese is two kind, de offisher and de soldier ordinary. De offisher always is very hangry man, and call de Arabes people black ; becos dese offisher have bad sense in de head and is liar. De soldiers ordinary dis I like very much ; becos he got very little money, but always he give, and he laugh and have very good sense, always friend for me and de Arabes. Sometime if he drink too much he is very devil man, but I like him.

“ De *French*, all de same ; like monkey ; sometime he laugh ; sometime he hangry ; sometime he sorry ; he shake de head ; he shake de hand ; and is like foolish man.

“ De *Italian* is like one man for dance ; one cooriostee ; and in dis country we laugh for de Italian because he not got good sense.

“ De *German* dis is very hangry and savage ; never he laugh ; what he want he take ; and what he take he keep. When de emperor German he come here he—better I say notin, our gouvenoor he like him too much. De German nation always hangry for de antiquitee,

but he did not like give baksheesh, so he get bad antiquitee. Same time he ride very bad, becos he have belly very big and legs very short; and de Arabs man always he laugh for de German traveller, becos on de horse he look like one large bag full of corn. Dis nation we not like becos he is very hungry for his money.

“From de *Rooshan* I see very vile, beas’ly, dirty people; bad sense in de head and bad smell in his body; he drink many tings make him foolish; and never he go the Hammam bath, never he wash at all; dis *Rooshan* pilgrim people is very tiresome. If I go nearest him I come very sick because his smell more bad from de Jews; de *Rooshan* he hangry for de religion. In de time Easter, he come more foolish from de Darwish Mohammedan, becos first he pray; den he drink; den he fight; den he make pray noder time. De gouvenoor Turkish by force he must send many soldiers Mohammedan to make good order in de church from de Saint Sepulchre. Dis is very shame for all de nation Christian.

“De *Toorkish* peoples of de gouvenoor, dis is sometime very bad and sometime very good; but we Christian from Jerusalem we like him better from the *Rooshan* if he come. De *Rooshan* is very debil gouvenoor, de *Toorkish*

he sometimes bad, but if give him little bak-sheesh he come very quiet, and never he take de Christian to do soldier military; but I know de Rooshan gouvenoor he is debil. When I see de Rooshan people very meselable, and very poor, I see becos he got very vile gouvenour; catch plenty tax; give him bad bread; and make him do service military very stiff. I pray our God he keep it de Rooshan far away from us, becos if he catch dis country from the Toorkish he make us like animal; I pray our God he help de Toorkish if de Rooshan commence make fight.

“De Christian in dis country we have many kind; some is good men, and dis is de *Christian from Bethlehem*; dis is very good; very quiet and nice nation. The *Maronites* nation is very vile; he do shame busy, becos he got no sense. If he think perhaps he catch some money, he sell his wife. Dis is de shame busy, and becos he do dis beas'ly tings some traveller like him for servant. De Maronites people he got fine sense for de money but he not got sense like de *Armenian*. De Armenian, he is debil liar, and no shame 'tall; perhaps de Maronites man he got little shame, but Armenian not got shame notin 'tall.

From de Mohamadan peoples, we have de

Bedouin ; de felláhín ; de people from de town ; and de Cherkesse.

“ De *Bedouin*, he is robber and hangry man, before he catch plenty money from de people on de road, because he have nice horse and in de hold time good guns. Now very different becos de gouvenoor Toorkish he make nice order and send many soldier wid gun martini and he cut many Bedouin out from de country; and now no one 'fraid from dis people, becos his powder very bad and his gun very hold. Now before time when I was boy small de Bedouin very strong was, if five or six felláhín man he walk in de road and one Bedouin sheikh he come wid nice lance and say with high voice ‘*Ergab, Ergab* shake down de closes ! shake down de closes !’ by force de felláhín man he shake down his closes, and one Bedouin sheikh he take all de trousers complete from all de poor men felláhín. Now very different because de gouvenoor Toorkish he send many soldiers, many zaptieh, and beat de Bedouin. Now, when de Bedouin he came in our country, he is like very good man, but if de gouvenoor not look out plenty for him he make trouble noder time.

“ De *felláhín Mohamadan* is very easy man and very quiet ; he never make trouble ; he

do service military; he like de sultan Abdul Hamid very much; and if de sultan tell him do sometin' he do it.

"*De Mahomadan from de town* dis very bad in Damascus country, he very hangry for de religion, and he say bad word for de religion of de Christian. He is very nasty becos he not do from de order of Mohamad; becos Mohamad he say 'Better not drink de wine,' but de Mohamadan from de town he drink French cognac and say 'Bismillah dis not wine, becos de wine from de grapes made.' Same time he make plenty pray, and say many nasty tings for de Christian and for de traveller, but he like catch de money from de traveller, and only he say bad word when he gone far 'way. Many time I hear him say to traveller Henglish '*a samm alaik, samm alaik,*' and de traveller Henglish not understand it Arabic very good, think dis is '*a'salaam alaik,*' which mean 'Our God he help you;' but '*a samm alaik*' it mean 'I give you poison.' Dis is de joke from de Mohamadan of de town, dis is nasty people.

"*De Cherkesse* (Circassian) dis is people good sense and good order, he was before time in Cherkesse country livin'; but de Rooshan he catch his country, and beat him plenty, and do

many tings bad for him, and de Cherkesse people go to our sultan and say, 'You our master ; you help us.' De sultan, becos de Cherkesse is poor peoples, help him plenty, and send him here. Now de Cherkesse he make houses very good and many nice village becos he got sense like de Henglish ; for make it roads good, and carriage good ; and put corn in the ground very well ; and take plenty crops. Only one ting bad dis people have it, and dis is de custom to catch de horse ; if he see nice horse soon he steal it, and if he sell de horse he make plenty high price.

"Noder kind people we have in dis country is de *Jews* man, and dis man is more vile, more dirty, more beas'ly from all de world ; becos he dirty like Rooshan custom and robber like Armenian. When I see Jews man I hangry and I spit (ptoo) for him becos he is vile ; every one he spit for him de Mohamadan and de Christian all de same, and never de Jew he say notin becos he know dis is his fault."

Those who have any acquaintance with the East or with orientals will appreciate the shrewdness of these character sketches. The following story, which 'Isá told me about himself, is worth adding as it will help my readers to form some idea of his own character.

“Before time was I make it one journey with one gentleman from German nation in Nazaret’ country, and one night, after dark time coming, I sit it in the tent, prepare some dinner for my gentleman. I hear someone in de dark, weelin plenty and very sorry, and I say, ‘Who weelin?’ and I see one boy small from de nation Soudan, ’bout twelve year hold, and his belly very small, and always he weelin, ‘I hungry too much, our God he help me,’ like the custom from de beggar in de road from Bethlehem. But I see his face very black and very nice, and his tooth very white, like one piece white cheese in one black box, and when I see he have nice face and very meselable, I call him come nearest, and he come, but weelin always. Den I say to him, ‘What matter?’ and he say, ‘I am poor boy and plenty hungry,’ and I say, ‘How you come it in this busy?’ And he say nodder time, ‘I am poor boy, and before time I was slave for one pasha Toorkish, an’ he like me very much, and I like him, and I was servant for him, and by-’m-by come order for my master to go Constantinopoli, and I make back it up his closes and his bed, and we go togedder to de steamer in Beyroute. And when we go to de steamer, my master he say ‘I like some

dates,' and he give me five piastre and one metallic; and I go shore and *cherche* in de bazaar for some dates, and I find some good dates like honel sweet. I buy it, and I go nodder time to de harbor; den I see de steamer ran far away, and I see my master he leave it me behine. Den by force I weelin; and I eat every day somethin from the dates I buy for my master, and now I walking nine days, and some people he gave me little bread becos I am very poor and meselable.' And de boy black he commence weelin nodder time, and I see he talkin really word, and I give him some bread, and goat's milk (becos many goats in Nazaret country). Den I tell him he sleep in de tent, and after I make some busy for him, and he very pleased and thank me too much, and he kiss my hand and call me *Yaba* (O Father.)

"De next mo'nin I call him come de bazaar wid me and I tell him 'You are poor boy and I take you on my charge, and you make servant for me, and I show you many tings how cook it, and I give you every week three piastre.' And he say, 'Very good; you like father for me, but not give de piastre but put in one box and afterward if I like I take it.' And I make it dis rangement wid him, and I take him in

de bazaar and buy him one tarboosh red colour, and trowsers complete, red colour, for cooriositee; becos if de black wear red colour even de donkey be pleased and laugh. I buy him one basket; and every day I take him like porter to de bazaar, and I show him de custom for de waiter, and how cook it European custom for de traveller, and Arabs' custom for me and for him, and he is very content and he come like servant for me for two years. In season time he help me wid de traveller and in summer he is servant in my house in Jerusalem.

“Now after two years make finish, in winter time he commence cough and come sick, becos in Jerusalem is plenty snow, and I take him to de doctor European in Jerusalem (one Italian was, and have good sense), and he say, ‘Dis boy if he remain in Jerusalem he die; better he go in Egypt country.’

“So I tell de boy, and I give him his piastre always I keep for him in de box, and I give him five mejidi extra baksheesh, and I weelin becos I like him too much and he weelin, becos he like me, and he go in Egypt country. Now after three year was finished, I have chance to take it one party English people to Alexandria in Egypt, and in de hotel I see de

boy, but now very different from before; he have European closes, and boots yallow colour, and stick for walkin from ebony wood, and watch very fine gold make it, and collar European and very white, and he is very fat, and content. And when he see me he say *Alhamdolillah* like custom of de Moslem, and he laughin and weelin same time, becos now he not see me for fo' tree year, and I say *Alhamdolillah*, and am very content, and I give him embrase. Den I ask him, 'How you comin' very reesh?' and he laugh, and he shake his pocket, and he show me many napoleons; and den I ask hem nodder time, 'How you catch it dis money?' Den he say, 'I am engage for servant for one engineer from de steamer Henglish, and his wife like me very much, and give me de money from de master, and de master not know notin'tall! Dis how I catch it de money.' Den I hangry wid dis boy, and I say, 'Before time you was good boy, now you come very vile, very beas'ly, very nasty, very dirty boy, becos you traite your master, and by-'m-by our God He beat you becos you traite you master!' And he laugh too much, and ask me if I like some mastic, and I tell him go far away, and not talk to me; and I tell him if he see me in de bazaar or de

café better he not come nearest becos he is very vile.

“Den after I finish de party English, I go nodder time to my house in Jerusalem. After six months I see dis boy come back in Jerusalem, and I ask him why he come back, and he say ‘My master and his wife is go home to Europe country, and de wife leave it me fifty pounds.’ Den I say, ‘Go far away becos I ’fraid from you becos soon our God He beat you,’ and he go ’way.

“Now was in the bazaar one writer and change-moneyman, from de nation Armenian; now dis was before de revalation Armenian, and all de Armenian was rich, becos he do many busy. Sometimes he go to de mission Henglish, and make converted and catch money; sometime he go like Jews’ proselyte and catch money; sometime thief de pilgrim Rooshan, sometime he lend it money, and always he catch money.

“Now, de Toorkish governoor he beat him too much, and our God he leave it because dis is nasty nation.

“Now, dis Armenian was high tief, and when he see de boy black in de bazaar wid plenty money, he call him, and he give him some food, and den he say, ‘You like perhaps

make combination wid me for money change-it." And de boy, foolish and stoopid, not know de custom from de Armenian, he say, 'Very good,' and give him all his money; in two day de Armenian ran far away and take all de money from de boy. And de boy very angry and shouting, and make high voice like dog, and weelin, and his belly come very big becos he so hangry. Den he come to me, and I say, 'You see our God He beat ;' and he say notin' but 'God damn for dis debil Armenian.' Den he go Jaffa, and he hear de Armenian is go Beyroute, and he go by steamer to Beyroute, and sleep on the deck becos he not have money to pay go downstairs; and in Beyroute he find de Armenian gone Smyrna. Den he leave it and he come back Jaffa by steamer, and come back Jerusalem, and was winter time, and becos he sleep on de deck from de steamer and because snow fall down in Jerusalem, he commence cough, and by-'m-by blood come from his mouth and den by force he die—poor boy. Our God He beat him, poor boy."

II.—“HOW THE PALIKAR’S HONOUR WAS
MADE WHITE.”

I have said (p. 8), that we beguiled the hours of march by telling stories. The following one of “How the Palikar’s Honour was made White,” told me by one of my servants, will serve as an example. *Se non è vero è ben trovato.*

“Un vois dang le ville de Beyrout, moziou, il y avait un gran baligar maomidang; et guesto baligar ni bordait ny coultre ny revolver, et guand il allait dang le gafé toud ile mond ves-aient gran salaam ber lui. Mais dang zette ville il y avait anghe un altre baligar, baligar des gretiens, jeunehomme, vorte,—shebab (handsome young fellow). Et zet jeunehomme il bordait doux revolvers boldogues, un a chague coste; et doux coultres un izi, et un izi. Un nuit zet baligar des gretiens il allait dang le gafé, et il a bon bieng di arrak. Ba’dein (*presently*) le baligar des maomidangs, il vieng dang le gafe, et toud ile monde si mi dibout, per vaire salaam per lui. Mais le baligar des gretiens il reste azzis: et le baligar des maomidangs il marche a lui; et li dit, ‘Gomment vous non vaite salaam bour moi?’ Alours le gretien il dit ‘Je non vais jamais salaam bour

un gochong gomme vous !' Alours le maomidang il dit 'Dinak ya kelb ibn kelb'; (*i.e.*, Curse your religion dog son of a dog) et buis il li donne doux golpes dang le vigure—Tach ! —Tach !! et le baligar des gretiens il dombe gomme un morte. Alours on le borte dihors di le gafe. Alours le gretien il bense per lui même, 'Mon honour est bartie,' et zon ventre divient grosse dang lui. Alours il ze trouve quatre di ses amis—jeunehommes vortes gomme des lions; il attend per quatre zemaines; et abresela un soir dous le zincs il boient bieng de mastique. Et buis il attendent dihors di la case de maomidang, et guand il venait dihors li quatre gretiens lui prangent bar li bras et li tiengent, vorte, verme. Et buis le baligar de gretiens il zorte zes doux coultres, et il dranche dang la viande di le vigure dou maomidang; et buis il zorte zes doux revolvers et li tire dang le ventre—Tach !—Tach !! Tach !!!—et li laisse morte bar derre. Alours il monte zon jeval va vite dang le mondagnes des Maronites. Et jamais les Turcs ne lui addraba. Ah ! il edait vorte ze jeunehomme la, et li vigure d'un lion."

III.—A QUARREL AMONG MY SERVANTS.

Quarrels of this sort were frequent, the following is a fairly faithful report of one of them :

Dragoman. This is very bad cook, Sir. He shoot (cheats) me. He shoot me plenty money and the muleteers man he help him shoot me.

Cook. (*At a distance of about twenty yards.*) Questo Turguman dit multo di mensange (*raising his voice*) yá kazzab.

Dragoman. (*To the cook.*) Ana kazzab yá harrah? (*To me.*) You see this is very tief man, he shoot me and he call me liar. He make me look curious every one he laugh for me.

Here the waiter entered and took part in the discussion.

Waiter. Pour l'amour di Dieu ni l'y laissez s'y battre.

Dragoman. This waiter he melle himself in this busy. This is not his refer.

Myself. What is the matter?

D. Plenty things matter.

M. Tell me the story.

D. I tell you the eestory. Before time I give this cook two mejidi. I tell him to go to the bazaar cherche many things ; some aiggs, some shicken, one small goat's femeline.

C. (*Interrupting at the same distance.*) Yá kazzab.

D. Uscut, kelb ibn kelb. (*Continuing.*) By and bye he come back from the bazaar, he bring no aiggs. I say to him where is theses? He say I no find and he call Omar the muleteer who requeer (*accompanied*) him, and the muleteer he say "This is really word." Then I say "You give it me the two mejidi, I go by myself to the bazaar cherche the aiggs—

C. (*Interrupting.*) Questo non è vero dice. Io a pagare per una donna di capri!

D. Non è vero, animale. You see this cook he is high splendid liar. I tell him go buy one goat's femeline, plenty young child and he buy one very old, very meselable.

W. Pour l'amour di Dieu ce n'est pas la regle di faire des batailles ainsi.

D. What for this waiter. He melle himself in my refer.

C. (*Still at the same distance.*) Turguman maladetto è anche curioso.

D. You see he make us curious, he is rubbish cook. I make a report for him when I go to Jerusalem. He wants spoil my refer.

C. Turguman maladetto! ana maladetto yá khansir.

D. You see he say bad word for me. This is rubbish man, high fine robber, all robbers. I am fall down in this devil voyage. This cook

easy man, easy man, muleteers very easy men, only I work. He is high robber 'ayb, 'ayb yá ma'lún. He got no shame.

C. Questo dragoman turguman avea el lingua d'il diavolo.

D. Inta kaman !

C. Dín kull el beladkum.

D. He say bad word for the religion of my country. I give him one box in the head and break him soon.

W. Pour l'amour de Dieu me le laissez pas ce toud li monde dites nous somme courieux.

C. and D. Uscut yá sofraji.

W. Min uscut ?

D. (*To me.*) This is rubbish waiter, he go melle himself in my refer.

W. Moi j'y ni melle bas in questa scandale.

D. Oui moizou il sy melle.

C. Hadha mooch suffragie hadha kelp.

W. Ana kelp ?

All. Uscut !

<i>Together</i>	{	<i>D.</i> Now you see this debil cook he call all these people to go break my head.
		<i>W.</i> Bour quoi cet dragaman il abelle toud le monde bour me brisser ?
		<i>C.</i> Per che questi doui mandari touto questi genti cativi ber la rombimente del mia testa ?

M. Look here, 'Isá, if you do not stop it this botheration I call all the soldiers man to put it you in prison.

Peace !

IV.—INTERVIEW WITH AN OFFICIAL.

When I interviewed a pasha or kaimakám through my dragoman the conversation generally took the following form :

Dragoman. This high splendid man he make good salute for you.

Myself. I thank him very much indeed. The honour is too great.

He want to know which you like it best, you country or this country.

You cannot compare the two countries, in some ways my country is better than Turkey, and in others Turkey is better than my country.

He want to know which more high splendid, Paris or Constantinople ?

No one will compare Constantinople with any other city in the world.

He want to know what for you come this country.

I come to see this country.

He want to know if you are engaged from your government to come look this country.

No, I come for my own pleasure.

What use, he ask, to come see meselable country like this ?

Many people have been to this country and many people are great liars.

He want to know if you are engaged for your government.

Tell him I am not engaged by my government.

He want to know if you make some cartes [maps].

No. I do not make cartes.

[*Here a servant would enter with coffee and cigarettes and I should say:*]

Tell him I thank him for the coffee.

He says coffee notin at all. Shame for him if he not give it you. He want to know it is really story that all the officer French is Jews man and if really that all these Jews trait the French governoor.

I do not know, but I have heard it said so.

Is it true that the English governoors have taken Crete for themselves ?

No, all the governments have taken Crete for themselves.

Hesay: If all the governoors Europe will catch Crete for himself soon he commences make fight.

I think it is quite possible.

Is it true that they make one meselable Greek boy king for all the Crete?

I am sorry to say so.

He says, "it is plenty shame for the Europe to take a meselable man like this, shame for the Turkish to leave it."

[I should then probably ask some such question as:]

How many miles is it from here to Damascus?

This high splendid man, he says about twelve hours. He say no use to go away to-morrow, better we make rest here, sleep in his house and he give us plenty things to eatet and drinket.

Tell him I have my camp and a kitchen.

He say, "Very shame for him if you eat in you tent when he eat in his house."

Tell him it is my custom to eat in my tent.

He say, "If you like have his house and everything inside all belong you if you like take it."

Tell him I thank him.

ERRATUM IN MAP.

Uch Kalissa should come before Malhúna, and should be spelt Uch Kilissa.

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