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T R A V E L S

TO DISCOVER THE

SOURCE OF THE NILE,

IN THE YEARS

1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

BY JAMES BRUCE, OF KINNAIRD, ESQ. F. R. S.

V O L. II.

*Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem,
Occulitque caput, quod adhuc latet.*———

OVID. Metam.

D U B L I N :

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C O N T E N T S

O F T H E
S E C O N D V O L U M E.



B O O K I I.

A N N A L S O F A B Y S S I N I A, T R A N S L A T E D F R O M T H E O R I G I N A L.

ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST AGES OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN
TRADE—THE FIRST PEOPLING OF ABYSSINIA AND ATBARA
---SOME CONJECTURES CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF LAN-
GUAGE THERE.

C H A P. I.

*Of the Indian Trade in its earliest Ages—Settle-
ment of Ethiopia—Troglodytes—Building of
the first Cities.* — — — I

C H A P. II.

*Saba and the South of Africa peopled—Shepherds
their particular Employment and Circumstances
—Abyssinia occupied by seven Stranger Nati-
ons—Specimens of their several Languages—
Conjectures concerning them.* — 17

C H A P. III.

*Origin of Characters or Letters—Ethiopic the first
Language—How and why the Hebrew Letter
was formed.* — — — 48

C H A P.

C O N T E N T S.

C H A P. IV.

*Some Account of the Trade-Winds and Monsoons—
Application of this to the Voyage to Ophir and
Tarshish.* — — — 64

C H A P. V.

*Fluctuating State of the India Trade—Hurt by mi-
litary Expeditions of the Persians—Revives
under the Ptolemies—Falls to Decay under the
Romans.* — — — 84

C H A P. VI.

*Queen of Saba visits Jerusalem—Abyssinian Tra-
dition concerning Her—Supposed Founder of
that Monarchy—Abyssinia embraces the Jewish
Religion—Jewish Hierarchy still retained by
the Falasha—Some Conjectures concerning their
Copy of the Old Testament.* — — — 109

C H A P. VII.

*Books in use in Abyssinia—Enoch—Abyssinia not
converted by the Apostles—Conversion from
Judaism to Christianity by Frumentius.* 132

C H A P. VIII.

*War of the Elephant—First Appearance of the
Small Pox—Jews persecute the Christians in
Arabia—Defeated by the Abyssinians—Maho-
met pretends a Divine mission—Opinion con-
cerning the Koran—Revolution under Judith—
Restoration of the Line of Solomon from Shoa.* 150

C O N T E N T S.

B O O K III.

CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIANS, FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE LINE OF SOLOMON TO THE DEATH OF SOCINIOS, AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE ROMISH RELIGION.

I C O N A M L A C.

From 1268 to 1283.

Line of Solomon restored under this Prince—He continues the Royal Residence in Shoa—Tecla Haimanout dies—Reasons for the Fabrication of the supposed Nicene Canon. — 177

I G B A S I O N.

From 1283 to 1312.

Quick Succession of Princes—Memoirs of these Reigns deficient. — — 180

A M D A S I O N.

From 1312 to 1342.

Licentious beginning of this King's Reign—His rigorous Conduct with the Monks of Debra Libanos—His Mahometan Subjects Rebel—Mara and Adel declare War—Are defeated in several Battles, and submit. — — 181

S A I F A R A A D.

From 1342 to 1370.

This Prince enjoys a peaceable Reign—Protects the Patriarch of the Coptis at Cairo from the Persecution of the Soldan. — — 239

W E D E M A S F E R I.

From 1370 to 1380.

Memoirs of this and the following Reign defective. 240

C O N T E N T S.

D A V I D II.

From 1380 to 1409. 241

T H E O D O R U S.

From 1409 to 1412.

Memoirs of this Reign, though held in great Esteem in Abyssinia, defective, probably mutilated by the Ecclesiastics. 242

I S A A C.

From 1412 to 1429.

No Annals of this, nor the four following Reigns. 243

ANDREAS I. OR AMDA SION. 244

TECLA MARIAM, OR HASEB NANYA.

From 1429 to 1433. 245

SARWE YASOUS. ib.

AMD A Y A S O U S. ib.

Z A R A J A C O B.

From 1434 to 1463.

Sends Ambassadors from Jerusalem to the Council of Florence—First Entry of the Roman Catholics into Abyssinia, and Dispute about Religion—King persecutes the Remnants of Sabaism and Idolatry—Mahometan Provinces rebel, and are subdued—The King dies. 246

B O E D A M A R I A M.

From 1468 to 1478.

Revises the Banishment of Princes to the Mountain—War with Adel—Death of the King—Attempts by Portugal to discover Abyssinia and the dies. — — — 256

ISCANDER,

C O N T E N T S.

ISCANDER, OR ALEXANDER.

From 1478 to 1495.

Iscander declares War with Adel—Good Conduct of the King—Betrayed and Murdered by Za Saluce. — — — 293

N O A D.

From 1495 to 1508.

Wise Conduct of the King—Prepares for a war with the Moors—Concludes an honourable Peace with Adel. — — — 299

D A V I D III.

From 1508 to 1540.

David, an Infant, succeeds—Queen sends Matthew Ambassador to Portugal—David takes the field—Defeat of the Moors—Arrival of an Embassy from Portugal—Disastrous War with Adel. — — — 304

CLAUDIUS, OR ATZENAF SEGUED.

From 1540 to 1559.

Prosperous Beginning of Claudius's Reign—Christopher de Gama lands in Abyssinia—Prevented by the Rainy Season from joining the King—Battle of Ainal—Battle of Offalo—Christopher de Gama slain—Battle of Isaacs Bet—Moors defeated, and their General slain—Abyssinian army defeated—Claudius slain—Remarkable Behaviour of Nur, Governor of Zeyla, General of the Moors. — — — 355

MENAS, OR ADAMAS SEGUED.

From 1559 to 1563.

Baharnagash rebels, proclaims Tascar King—Defeated by the King—Cedes Dobarwa to the Turks and makes a League with the Bascha of Masuah. 390

C O N T E N T S.

SERTZA DENGHEL, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1563 to 1595.

King crowned at Axum—Abyssinia invaded by the Galla—Account of that People—The King defeats the army of Adel—Beats the Falasha, and kills their King—Battle of the Mareb—Basha slain, and Turks expelled from Dobarwa—King is poisoned—Names Za Denghel his Successor. — — — 399

Z A D E N G H E L.

From 1595 to 1604.

Za Denghel dethroned—Jacob a Minor succeeds—Za Denghel is restored—Banishes Jacob to Narea—Converted to the Romish Religion—Battle of Bartcho, and Death of the King. — 424

J A C O B.

From 1604 to 1605.

Makes Proposals to Socinios, which are rejected—Takes the Field—Bad Conduct and Defeat of Za Selasse—Battle of Debra Zeit—Jacob defeated and slain. — — 439

SOCINIOS OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1605 to 1632.

Socinios embraces the Romish Religion—War with Sennaar—With the Shepherds—Violent Conduct of the Romish Patriarch—Lasta rebels—Defeated at Wainadega—Socinios restores the Alexandrian Religion—Resigns his Crown to his Eldest Son. — — 449

T R A V E L S

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

B O O K II.

ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST AGES OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN TRADE—THE FIRST PEOPLING OF ABYSSINIA AND ATBARA—SOME CONJECTURES CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE THERE.

C H A P. I.

Of the India trade in its earliest ages—Settlement of Ethiopia—Trogodytes—Building of the first cities.

THE farther back we go into the history of Eastern nations, the more reason we have to be surpris'd at the accounts of their immense riches and magnificence. One who reads the history of Egypt is like a traveller walking through its ancient, ruin'd, and deserted towns, where all are palaces and temples, without any trace of private or ordinary habitation. So in the earliest, though now mutilated,

lated, accounts which we have of them, all is power, splendour, and riches, attended by the luxury which was the necessary consequence, without any clue or thread left us by which we can remount, or be conducted, to the source or fountain whence this variety of wealth had flowed; without ever being able to arrive at a period, when these people were poor and mean, or even in a state of mediocrity, or upon a footing with European nations.

The sacred scriptures, the most ancient, as well as the most credible of all histories, represent Palestine, of which they particularly treat, in the earliest ages, as not only full of polished, powerful, and orderly states, but abounding also in silver and gold *, in a greater proportion than is to be found this day in any state in Europe, though immensely rich dominions in a new world have been added to the possession of that territory, which furnished the greatest quantity of gold and silver to the old. Palestine, however, is a poor country, left to its own resources and produce merely. It must have been always a poor country, without some extraordinary connection with foreign nations. It never contained either mines of gold or silver, and though, at most periods of its history, it appears to have been but thinly inhabited, it never of itself produced wherewithal to support and maintain the few that dwelt in it.

Mr. De Montefquieu †, speaking of the wealth of Semiramis, imagines that the great riches of the
Assyrian

* Exod. xxxviii. 39.

† Lib. 21. cap. 6.

Assyrian empire in her reign, arose from this queen's having plundered some more ancient and richer nation, as they, in their turn, fell afterwards a prey to a poorer, but more warlike enemy. But however true this fact may be with regard to Semiramis, it does not solve the general difficulty, as still the same question recurs, concerning the wealth of that prior nation, which the Assyrians plundered, and from which they received their treasure. I believe the example is rare, that a large kingdom has been enriched by war. Alexander conquered all Asia, part of Africa, and a considerable portion of Europe; he plundered Semiramis's kingdom, and all those that were tributary to her; he went farther into the Indies than ever she did, though her territories bordered upon the river Indus itself; yet neither Macedon, nor any of the neighbouring provinces of Greece, could ever compare with the small districts of Tyre and Sidon for riches.

War disperses wealth in the very instant it acquires it; but commerce, well regulated, constantly and honestly supported, carried on with œconomy and punctuality, is the only thing that ever did enrich extensive kingdoms; and one hundred hands employed at the loom will bring to a country more riches and abundance, than ten thousand bearing spears and shields. We need not go far to produce an example that will confirm this. The subjects and neighbours of Semiramis had brought spices by land into Assyria. The Ishmaelites and Midianites, the merchants and carriers of gold from Ethiopia, and more immediately from Palestine, met in her dominions; and there was, for a

time, the mart of the East India trade. But, by an absurd expedition with an army into India, in hopes to enrich herself all at once, she effectually ruined that commerce, and her kingdom fell immediately afterwards.

Whoever reads the history of the most ancient nations, will find the origin of wealth and power to have risen in the east; then to have gradually advanced westward, spreading itself at the same time north and south. They will find the riches and population of those nations decay in proportion as this trade forsakes them; which cannot but suggest to a good understanding, this truth constantly to be found in the disposition of all things in this universe, that God makes use of the smallest means and causes to operate the greatest and most powerful effects. In his hand a pepper-corn is the foundation of the power, glory, and riches of India; he makes an acorn, and by it communicates power and riches to nations divided from India by thousands of leagues at sea.

Let us pursue our consideration of Egypt. Sesostris, before the time we have been just speaking of, passed with a fleet of large ships from the Arabian Gulf into the Indian Ocean; he conquered part of India, and opened to Egypt the commerce of that country by sea. I enter not into the credibility of the number of his fleet, as there is scarce any thing credible left us about the shipping and navigation of the ancients, or at least, that is not full of difficulties and contradictions; my business is with the expedition; not with the number of ships. It would appear he revived, rather than first discovered,

vered, this way of carrying on the trade to the East Indies, which, though it was at times intermitted, (perhaps forgot by the Princes who were contending for the sovereignty of the continent of Asia, was, nevertheless, perpetually kept up by the trading nations themselves, from the ports of India and Africa, and on the Red Sea from Edom.

The pilots from these ports alone, of all the world, had a secret confined to their own knowledge, upon which the success of these voyages depended. This was the phenomena of the trade-winds * and monsoons, which the pilots of Sesostris knew; and which those of Nearchus seem to have taught him only in part, in his voyage afterwards, and of which we are to speak in the sequel. History says further of Sesostris, that the Egyptians considered him as their greatest benefactor, for having laid open to them the trade both of India and Arabia, for having overturned the dominion of the *Shepherd* kings; and, lastly, for having restored to the Egyptian individuals each their own lands, which had been wrested from them by the violent hands of the Ethiopian *Shepherds*, during the first usurpation of these princes.

In memory of his having happily accomplished these events, Sesostris is said to have built a ship of cedar, of a hundred and twenty yards in length, the outside of which he covered with plates of gold, and the inside with plates of silver, and this he dedicated in the temple of Isis. I will not enter into the defence of the probability of his reasons

for

* These are far from being synonymous terms, as we shall see afterwards.

for having built a ship of this size, and for such a purpose, as one of ten yards would have sufficiently answered. The use it was made for, was apparently to serve for a hieroglyphic, of what he had accomplished, viz. that he had laid open the gold and silver trade from the mines in Ethiopia, and had navigated the ocean in ships made of wood, which were the only ones, he thereby insinuated, that could be employed in that trade. The Egyptian ships, at that time, were all made of the reed papyrus §, covered with skins or leather, a construction which no people could venture to present to the ocean.

There is much to be learned from a proper understanding of these last benefits conferred by Sesostris upon his Egyptian subjects. When we understand these, which is very easy to any that have travelled in the countries we are speaking of, (for nations and causes have changed very little in these countries to this day), it will not be difficult to find a solution of this problem, What was the commerce that, progressively, laid the foundation of all that immense grandeur of the east; what polished them, and cloathed them with silk, scarlet, and gold; and what carried the arts and sciences among them, to a pitch, perhaps, never yet surpassed, and this some thousands of years before nations in Europe had any other habitation than their native woods, or cloathing than the skins of beasts, wild and domestic, or government, but that first, innate one, which nature had given to the strongest?

Let us inquire what was the connection Sesostris brought about between Egypt and India; what was that

§ See the article Papyrus in the Appendix.

that commerce of Ethiopia and Arabia, by which he enriched Egypt, and what was their connection with the peninsula of India; who were those kings who bore so opposite an office, as to be at the same time *Shepherds*; and who were those *Shepherds*, near, and powerful enough to wrest the property of their lands from four millions of inhabitants.

To explain this, it will be necessary to enter into some detail, without which no person dipping into the ancient or modern history of this part of Africa, can have any precise idea of it, nor of the different nations inhabiting the peninsula, the source of whose wealth consisted entirely in the early, but well-established commerce between Africa and India. What will make this subject of more easy explanation is, that the ancient employment and occupations of these people in the first ages, were still the same that subsist at this day. The people have altered a little by colonies of strangers being introduced among them, but their manners and employments are the same as they originally were. What does not relate to the ancient history of these people, I shall only mention in the course of my travels when passing through, or sojourning amongst them.

Providence had created the inhabitants of the peninsula of India under many disadvantages in point of climate. The high and wholesome part of the country was covered with barren and rugged mountains; and, at different times of the year, violent rains fell in large currents down the sides of these, which overflowed all the fertile land below; and these rains were no sooner over, than they were succeeded

succeeded by a scorching sun, the effect of which upon the human body, was to render it feeble, enervated, and incapable of the efforts necessary for agriculture. In this flat country, large rivers, that scarce had declivity enough to run, crept slowly along, through meadows of fat black earth, stagnating in many places as they went, rolling an abundance of decayed vegetables, and filling the whole air with exhalations of the most corrupt and putrid kind. Even rice, the general food of man, the safest and most friendly to the inhabitants of that country, could not grow but by laying under water the places where it was sown, and therefore rendering them, for several months, absolutely improper for man's dwelling. Providence had done this, but, never failing in its wisdom, had made to the natives a great deal more than a sufficient amends.

Their bodies were unfit for the fatigues of agriculture, nor was the land proper for common cultivation. But this country produced spices of great variety, especially a small berry called Pepper, supposed, of all others, and with reason, to be the greatest friend to the health of man. This grew spontaneously, and was gathered without toil. It was at once, a perfect remedy for the inclemencies and diseases of the country, as well as the source of its riches, from the demand of foreigners. This species of spice is no where known but in India, though equally useful in every putrid region, where, unhappily, these diseases reign. Providence has not, as in India, placed remedies so near them, thus wisely providing for the welfare of mankind in general, by the dependency it has forced one man to
have

have upon another. In India, and similar climates, this spice is not used in small quantities, but in such, as to be nearly equal to that of bread.

In cloathing, Providence had not been less kind to India. The silk worm, with little fatigue and trouble to man, almost without his interference, provided for him a stuff, at once the softest, the most light and brilliant, and consequently the best adapted to warm countries; and cotton, a vegetable production, growing every where in great abundance, without care, which may be considered as almost equal to silk, in many of its qualities, and superior to it in some, afforded a variety still cheaper for more general use. Every tree without culture produced them fruit of the most excellent kind; every tree afforded them shade, under which, with a very light and portable *loom* of cane, they could pass their lives delightfully in a calm and rational enjoyment, by the gentle exercise of weaving, at once providing for the health of their bodies, the necessities of their families, and the riches of their country.

But however plentifully their spices grew, in whatever quantity the Indians consumed them, and however generally they wore their own manufactures, the superabundance of both was such, as naturally led them to look out for articles against which they might barter their superfluities. This became necessary to supply the wants of those things that had been withheld for them, for wise ends, or which, from wantonness, luxury, or slender necessity, they had created in their own imaginations.

Far to the westward of them, but part of the same continent, connected by a long desert, and dangerous coast, was the peninsula of Arabia, which produced no spices, tho' the necessities of its climate subjected its inhabitants to the same diseases as those in India. In fact, the country and climate were exactly similar, and, consequently, the plentiful use of these warm productions was as necessary there, as in India, the country where they grew.

It is true, Arabia was not abandoned wholly to the inclemency of its climate, as it produced myrrh and frankincense, which, when used as perfumes or fumigations, were powerful antiseptics of their kind, but administered rather as preventatives, than to remove the disorder when it once prevailed. These were kept up at a price, of which, at this day, we have no conception, but which never diminished from any circumstance, under which the country where they grew, laboured.

The silk and cotton of India were white and colourless, liable to soil, and without any variety; but Arabia produced gum and dyes of various colours, which were highly agreeable to the taste of the Asiatics. We find the sacred scriptures speak of the party-coloured garment as the mark of the greatest honour*. Solomon, in his proverbs, too, says, that he decked his bed with coverings of tapestry of Egypt †. But Egypt had neither silk nor cotton manufactory, no, nor even wool. Solomon's coverings though he had them from Egypt, were therefore an article of barter with India.

Balm,

* Gen. xxxvii. 3. and 2 Sam. xiii. 18. † Prov. vii. 16.

Balm, or Balsam *, was a commodity produced in Arabia, sold at a very high price, which it kept up till within these few centuries in the east; when the Venetians carried on the India trade by Alexandria, this Balsam then sold for its weight in gold; it grows in the same place, and, I believe, nearly in the same quantity as ever, but, for very obvious reasons †, it is now of little value.

The basis of trade, or a connection between these two countries, was laid, then, from the beginning, by the hand of Providence. The wants and necessities of the one found a supply, or balance from the other. Heaven had placed them not far distant, could the passage be made by sea; but violent, steady, and unconquerable winds presented themselves to make that passage of the ocean impossible, and we are not to doubt, but, for a very considerable time, this was the reason why the commerce of India was diffused through the continent, by land only, and from this arose the riches of Semiramis.

But, however precious the merchandise of Arabia was, it was neither in quantity, nor quality, capable of balancing the imports from India. Perhaps they might have paid for as much as was used in the peninsula of Arabia itself, but, beyond this there was a vast continent called Africa, capable of consuming many hundred fold more than Arabia; which lying under the same parallel with India, part of it still farther south, the diseases of the climate, and the wants of its numerous inhabitants, were, in many parts of it, the same as those of Arabia

* Vide Appendix, where this tree is described.

† The quantity of similar drugs brought from the New World.

Arabia and India; besides which there was the Red Sea, and divers communications to the northward.

Neither their luxuries nor necessaries were the same as those of Europe. And indeed Europe, at this time, was probably inhabited by shepherds, hunters, and fishers, who had no luxury at all, or such as could not be supplied from India; they lived in woods and marshes, with the animals which made their sport, food, and cloathing.

The inhabitants of Africa then, this vast Continent, were to be supplied with the necessaries, as well as the luxuries of life, but they had neither the articles Arabia wanted, nor those required in India, at least, for a time they thought so; and so long they were not a trading people.

It is a tradition among the Abyssinians, which they say they have had from time immemorial, and which is equally received among the Jews and Christians, that almost immediately after the flood, Cush, grandson of Noah, with his family, passing through Atbara from the low country of Egypt, then without inhabitants, came to the ridge of mountains which still separates the flat country of Atbara from the more mountainous high-land of Abyssinia.

By casting his eye upon the map, the reader will see a chain of mountains, beginning at the Isthmus of Suez, that runs all along like a wall, about forty miles from the Red Sea, till it divides in lat. 13°, into two branches. The one goes along the northern frontiers of Abyssinia, crosses the Nile, and then proceeds westward, through Africa towards the Atlantic

lantic Ocean. The other branch goes southward, and then east, taking the form of the Arabian Gulf; after which, it continues southward all along the Indian Ocean, in the same manner as it did in the beginning all along the Red Sea, that is parallel to the coast.

Their tradition says, that, terrified with the late dreadful event the flood, still recent in their minds, and apprehensive of being again involved in a similar calamity, they chose for their habitation caves in the sides of these mountains, rather than trust themselves again on the plain. It is more than probable, that, soon after their arrival, meeting here with the tropical rains, which, for duration, still exceed the days that occasioned the flood, and observing, that going through Atbara, that part of Nubia between the Nile and Astaboras, afterwards called Meroë, from a dry climate at first, they had after fallen in with rains, and as those rains increased in proportion to their advancing southward, they chose to stop at the first mountains, where the country was fertile and pleasant, rather than proceed farther at the risk of involving themselves, perhaps in a land of floods, that might prove as fatal to their posterity as that of Noah had been to their ancestors.

This is a conjecture from probability, only mentioned for illustration, for the motives that guided them cannot certainly be known; but it is an undoubted fact, that here the Cushites, with unparalleled industry, and with instruments utterly unknown to us, formed for themselves commodious, yet wonderful habitations in the heart of mountains

of granite and marble, which remain entire in great numbers to this day, and promise to do so till the consummation of all things. This original kind of dwellings soon extended themselves through the neighbouring mountains. As the Cushites grew populous, they occupied those that were next them, spreading the industry and arts which they cultivated, as well to the eastern as to the western ocean, but, content with their first choice, they never descended from their caves, nor chose to reside at a distance on the plain.

It is very singular that St. Jerome does not know where to look for this family, or descendents of Cush; though they are as plainly pointed out, and as often alluded to by scripture, as any nation in the Old Testament. They are described, moreover, by the particular circumstances of their country, which have never varied, to be in the very place where I now fix them, and where, ever since, they have remained, and still do to this present hour, in the same mountains, and the same houses of stone they formed for themselves in the beginning. And yet Bochart*, professedly treating this subject, as it were industriously, involves it in more than Egyptian darkness. I rather refer the reader to his work, to judge for himself, than, quoting it by extracts, communicate the confusion of his ideas to my narrative.

The Abyssinian tradition further says, they built the city of Axum some time early in the days of Abraham. Soon after this, they pushed their colony down to Atbara, where we know from Herodotus,

* Boch. lib. 4. cap. 3.

dotus *, they early and successfully pursued their studies, from which Josephus says †, they were called Meroëtes, or inhabitants of the island of Meroe.

The prodigious fragments of colossal statues of the dog-star, still to be seen at Axum, sufficiently shew what a material object of their attention they considered him to be; and Seir, which in the language of the Troglodytes, and in that of the low country of Meroe, exactly corresponding to it, signifies a *dog*, instructs us in the reason why this province was called *Sire*, and the large river which bounds it, *Siris*.

I apprehend the reason why, without forsaking their ancient domiciles in the mountains, they chose this situation for another city, Meroe, was owing to an imperfection they had discovered (both in Siré and in their caves below it) to result from their climate. They were within the tropical rains; and, consequently, were impeded and interrupted in the necessary observations of the heavenly bodies, and the progress of astronomy which they so warmly cultivated. They must have seen, likewise, a necessity of building Meroe farther from them than perhaps they wished, for the same reason they built Axum in the high country of Abyssinia in order to avoid the fly (a phænomenon of which I shall afterwards speak) which pursued them everywhere within the limits of the rains, and which must have given an absolute law in those first times to the regulations of the Cushite settlements. They therefore went the length of lat. 16°, where I saw the ruins supposed to be those of Meroe ‡, and caves in the
mountains

* Herod. lib. 2. cap. 29. † Joseph. antiquit. Jud.

‡ At Gerri in my return through the desert.

mountains immediately above that situation, which I cannot doubt were the temporary habitation of the builders of that first seminary of learning.

It is probable that, immediately upon their success at Meroe, they lost no time in stretching on to Thebes. We know that it was a colony of Ethiopians, and probably from Meroe, but whether directly, or not, we are not certain. A very short time might have passed between the two establishments, for we find above Thebes, as there are above Meroe, a vast number of caves, which the colony made provisionally, upon its first arrival, and which are very near the top of the mountain, all inhabited to this day.

Hence we may infer, that their ancient apprehensions of a deluge had not left them whilst, they saw the whole land of Egypt could be overflowed every year without rain falling upon it; that they did not absolutely, as yet, trust to the stability of towns like those of Sirè and Meroë, placed upon columns or stones, one laid upon the other, or otherwise, that they found their excavations in the mountains were finished with less trouble, and more comfortable when complete, than the houses that were built. It was not long before they assumed a greater degree of courage.

C H A P. II.

Saba and the South of Africa peopled—Shepherds, their particular Employment and Circumstances—Abyssinia occupied by seven stranger Nations—Specimens of their several Languages—Conjectures concerning them.

WHILE these improvements were going on so prosperously in the central and northern territory of the descendents of Cush, their brethren to the south were not idle, they had extended themselves along the mountains that run parallel to the Arabian Gulf; which was in all times called Saba, or Azabo, both which signify *South*, not because Saba was south of Jerusalem, but because it was on the south coast of the Arabian Gulf, and, from Arabia and Egypt, was the first land to the southward which bounded the African Continent, then richer, more important, and better known, than the rest of the world. By that acquisition, they enjoyed all the perfumes and aromatics in the east, myrrh, and frankincense, and cassia; all which grow spontaneously in that stripe of ground, from the Bay of Bilur west of Azab, to Cape Gardesfan, and then southward up in the Indian Ocean, to near the coast of Melinda, where there is cinnamon, but of an inferior kind.

Arabia probably had not then set itself up as a rival to this side of the Red Sea, nor had it intro-

duced from Abyſſinia the myrrh and frankincenſe, as it did afterwards, for there is no doubt that the principal mart, and growth of theſe gums, were always near Saba. Upon the conſumption increaſing, they, however, were tranſplanted thence into Arabia, where the myrrh has not ſucceeded.

The Troglodyte extended himſelf ſtill farther ſouth. As an aſtronomer, he was to diſengage himſelf from the tropical rains and cloudy ſkies that hindered his correſpondent obſervations with his countrymen at Meroë and Thebes. As he advanced within the ſouthern tropic, he, however, ſtill found rains, and made his houſes ſuch as the fears of a deluge had inſtructed him to do. He found there ſolid and high mountains, in a fine climate; but, luckier than his countrymen to the northward, he found gold and ſilver in large quantities, which determined his occupation, and made the riches and conſequence of his country. In theſe mountains, called *the Mountains of Sofala*, large quantities of both metals were diſcovered in their pure unmixed ſtate, lying in globules without alloy, or any neceſſity of preparation or ſeparation.

The balance of trade, ſo long againſt the Arabian and African continents, turned now in their favour from the immense influx of theſe precious metals, found in the mountains of Sofala, juſt on the verge of the ſouthern tropical rains.

Gold and ſilver had been fixed upon in India as proper returns for their manufactures and produce. It is impoſſible to ſay whether it was from their hardneſs or beauty, or what other reaſon governed the mind of man in making this ſtandard of barter.

The

The history of the particular transactions of those times is lost, if indeed, there ever was such history, and, therefore, all further inquiries are in vain. The choice, it seems, was a proper one, since it has continued unaltered so many ages in India, and has been universally adopted by all nations pretty much in the proportion or value as in India, into which continent gold and silver, from this very early period, began to flow, have continued so to do to this day, and in all probability will do to the end of time. What has become of that immense quantity of bullion, how it is consumed, or where it is deposited, and which way, if ever it returns, are doubts which I never yet found a person that could satisfactorily solve.

The Cushite then inhabited the mountains; whilst the northern colonies advanced from Meroë to Thebes, busy and intent upon the improvement of architecture, and building of towns, which they began to substitute for their caves; they thus became traders, farmers, artificers of all kinds, and even practical astronomers, from having a meridian night and day free from clouds, for such was that of the Thebaid. As this was impossible to their brethren, and six months continual rain confined them to these caves, we cannot doubt but that their sedentary life made them useful in reducing the many observations daily made by those of their countrymen who lived under a purer sky. Letters too, at least one sort of them, and arithmetical characters, we are told, were invented by this middle part of the Cushites, while trade and astronomy, the natural history of the winds and seasons, were what

necessarily employed the part of the colony established at Sofala most to the southward.

The very nature of the Cushite's commerce, the collecting of gold, the gathering and preparing his spices, necessarily fixed him perpetually at home ; but his profit lay in the dispersing of these spices through the continent, otherwise his mines, and the trade produced by the possession of them, were to him of little avail.

A carrier was absolutely necessary to the Cushite, and Providence had provided him one in a nation which were his neighbours. These were in most respects different, as they had long hair, European features, very dusky and dark complexion, but nothing like the black-moor or negro ; they lived in plains, having moveable huts or habitations, attended their numerous cattle, and wandered from the necessities and particular circumstances of their country. These people were in the Hebrew called *Phut*, and, in all other languages, *Shepherds*; they are so still, for they still exist ; they subsist by the same occupation, never had another, and therefore cannot be mistaken ; they are called Balous, Bagla, Belowec, Berberi, Barabra, Zilla and Habab *, which all signify but one thing, namely that of *Shepherd*. From their place of habitation, the territory has been called *Barbaria* by the Greeks and Romans, from Berber, in the original signifying *shepherd*. The authors that speak of the Shepherds seem to know little of those of the *Thebaid*, and still less

* It is very probable, some of these words signified different degrees among them, as we shall see in the sequel.

less of those of *Ethiopia*, whilst they fall immediately upon the shepherds of the Delta, that they may get the sooner rid of them, and thrust them into Assyria, Palestine, and Arabia. They never say what their origin was; how they came to be so powerful; what was their occupation; or, properly, the land they inhabited; or what is become of them now, though they seem inclined to think the race extinct.

The whole employment of the shepherds had been the dispersing of the Arabian and African goods all over the continent; they had, by that employment, risen to be a great people: as that trade increased, their quantity of cattle increased also, and consequently their numbers, and the extent of their territory.

Upon looking at the map, the reader will see a chain of mountains which I have described, and which run in a high ridge nearly straight north, along the Indian Ocean, in a direction parallel to the coast, where they end at Cape Gardesfan. They then take the direction of the coast, and run west from Cape Gardesfan to the Straits of Babelmandeb, inclosing the frankincense and myrrh country, which extends considerably to the west of Azab. From Babelmandeb they run northward, parallel to the Red Sea, till they end in the sandy plain at the Isthmus of Suez, a name probably derived from Suah, *Shepherds*.

Although this stripe of land along the Indian Ocean, and afterwards along the Red Sea, was necessary to the shepherds, because they carried their merchandise to the ports there, and thence to Thebes and Memphis upon the Nile, yet the principal
 feat.

seat of their residence and power was that flat part of Africa between the northern tropic and the mountains of Abyssinia. This is divided into various districts; it reaches from Masuah along the sea-coast to Suakem, then turns westward, and continues in that direction, having the Nile on the south, the tropic on the north, to the deserts of Selima, and the confines of Libya on the west. This large extent of country is called *Beja*. The next is that district * in form of a shield, as Meroë is said to have been; this name was given it by Cambyfes. It is between the Nile and Astaboras, and is now called Atbara. Between the river Mareb, the ancient Astufaspes on the east, and Atbara on the west, is the small plain territory of Derkin, another district of the shepherds. All that range of mountains, running east and west, inclosing Derkin and Atbara on the south, and which begins the mountainous country of Abyssinia, is inhabited by the negro woolly-headed Cushite, or Shangalla, living as formerly in caves, who, from having been the most cultivated and instructed people in the world, have, by a strange reverse of fortune, relapsed into brutal ignorance, and are hunted by their neighbours like wild beasts in those forests, where they used to reign in the utmost luxury, liberty, and splendour. But the noblest, and most warlike of all the shepherds, were those that inhabited the mountains of the Habab, a considerable ridge reaching from the neighbourhood of Masuah to Suakem, and who still dwell there.

In

* Diod. Sic. lib. 1. cap.

In the ancient language of this country, *So*, or *Suah*, signified shepherd, or shepherds; though we do not know any particular rank or degrees among them, yet we may suppose these called simply *shepherds* were the common sort that attended the flocks. Another denomination, part of them bore, was *Hycfos*, founded by us *Agfos*, which signifies *armed shepherds*, or such as wore harness, which may be supposed the soldiers, or armed force of that nation. The third we see mentioned is *Ag-ag*, which is thought to be the nobles or chiefs of those armed shepherds, whence came their title *King of Kings* *. The plural of this is *Agagi*, or, as it is written in the Ethiopic, *Agaazi*.

This term has very much puzzled both Scaliger and Ludolf; for, finding in the Abyssinian books that they are called *Agaazi*, they torment themselves about finding the etymology of that word. They imagine them to be Arabs from near the Red Sea, and Mr. Ludolf † thinks the term signifies *banished men*. Scaliger, too, has various guesses about them nearly to the same import. All this, however, is without foundation; the people assert themselves at this day to be *Agaazi*, that is, a race of Shepherds inhabiting the mountains of the Habab, and have by degrees extended themselves through the whole province of Tigré, whose capital is called Axum, from *Ag* and *Suah*, the metropolis, or principal city of the shepherds that wore arms.

Nothing

* This was the name of the king of Amalek; he was an Arab shepherd, slain by Samuel, 1 Sam. xv. 33.

† Ludolf, lib. 1. cap. 4.

Nothing was more opposite than the manners and life of the Cushite, and his carrier the shepherd. The first, though he had forsaken his caves, and now lived in cities which he had built, was necessarily confined at home by his commerce, amassing gold, arranging the invoices of his spices, hunting in the season to provide himself with ivory, and food throughout the winter. His mountains, and the cities he built afterwards, were situated upon a loomy, black earth, so that as soon as the tropical rains began to fall, a wonderful phenomenon deprived him of his cattle. Large swarms of flies appeared wherever that loomy earth was, which made him absolutely dependent in this respect upon the shepherd, but this affected the shepherd also.

This insect is called *Zimb*; it has not been described by any naturalist. It is in size very little larger than a bee, of a thicker proportion, and his wings, which are broader than those of a bee, placed separate like those of a fly; they are a pure gauze, without colour or spot upon them; the head is large, the upper jaw or lip is sharp, and has at the end of it a strong-pointed hair of about a quarter of an inch long; the lower jaw has two of these pointed hairs, and this pencil of hairs, when joined together, makes a resistance to the finger nearly equal to that of a strong hog's bristle. Its legs are ferrated in the inside, and the whole covered with brown hair or down. As soon as this plague appears, and their buzzing is heard, all the cattle forsake their food, and run wildly about the plain, till they die, worn out with fatigue, fright, and hunger. No remedy remains but to leave the black earth,
and

and hasten down to the sands of Atbara, and there they remain while the rains last, this cruel enemy never daring to pursue them farther.

What enables the shepherd to perform the long and toilsome journies across Africa is the camel emphatically called by the Arabs, the *skip of the desert*. He seems to have been created for this very trade, endued with parts and qualities adapted to the office he is employed to discharge. The driest thistle, and the barest thorn, is all the food this useful quadruped requires, and even these, to save time, he eats while advancing on his journey, without stopping, or occasioning a moment of delay. As it is his lot to cross immense deserts, where no water is found, and countries not even moistened by the dew of heaven, he is endued with the power at one watering-place to lay in a store, with which he supplies himself for thirty days to come. To contain this enormous quantity of fluid, Nature has formed large cisterns within him, from which, once filled, he draws at pleasure the quantity he wants, and pours it into his stomach with the same effect as if he then drew it from a spring, and with this he travels, patiently and vigorously, all day long, carrying a prodigious load upon him, through countries infected with poisonous winds, and glowing with parching and never-cooling sands. Tho' his size is immense, as is his strength, and his body covered with a thick skin, defended with strong hair, yet still he is not capable to sustain the violent punctures the fly makes with his pointed proboscis. He must lose no time in removing to the sands of Atbara; for, when once attacked by this fly, his
body,

body, head, and legs break out into large bosses, which swell, break, and putrify, to the certain destruction of the creature.

Even the elephant and rhinoceros, who, by reason of their enormous bulk, and the vast quantity of food and water they daily need, cannot shift to desert and dry places as the season may require, are obliged to roll themselves in mud and mire, which, when dry, coats them over like armour, and enables them to stand their ground against this winged assassin; yet I have found some of these tubercles upon almost every elephant and rhinoceros that I have seen, and attribute them to this cause.

All the inhabitants of the sea-coast of Melinda, down to Cape Gardesfan, to Saba, and the south coast of the Red Sea, are obliged to put themselves in motion, and remove to the next sand in the beginning of the rainy season, to prevent all their stock of cattle from being destroyed. This is not a partial emigration; the inhabitants of all the countries from the mountains of Abyssinia northward, to the confluence of the Nile and Astaboras, are once a-year obliged to change their abode, and seek protection in the sands of Beja; nor is there any alternative, or means of avoiding this, though a hostile band was in their way, capable of spoiling them of half their substance; and this is now actually the case, as we shall see when we come to speak of Sennaar.

Of all those that have written upon these countries, the prophet Isaiah alone has given an account of this animal, and the manner of its operation. Isa. vii. ch. 18. and 19. ver. "And it shall come to
 " pass,

“ pass, in that day, that the Lord shall *hiss* for the
 “ fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of
 “ Egypt,”—“ And they shall come, and shall rest
 “ all of them in the desolate vallies *, and in the
 “ holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and up-
 “ on all bushes.”

The mountains that I have already spoken of, as running through the country of the Shepherds, divide the seasons by a line drawn along their summit, so exactly, that, while the eastern side, towards the Red Sea, is deluged with rain for the six months that constitute our *winter* in Europe, the western side towards Atbara enjoys a perpetual sun, and active vegetation. Again the six months, when it is our *summer* in Europe, Atbara, or the western side of these mountains, is constantly covered with clouds and rain, while, for the same time, the shepherd on the eastern side, towards the Red Sea, feeds his flocks in the most exuberant foliage and luxuriant verdure, enjoying the fair weather, free from the fly or any other molestation. These great advantages have very naturally occasioned these countries of Atbara and Beja to be the principal residence of the shepherd and his cattle, and have entailed upon him the necessity of a perpetual change of places. Yet so little is this inconvenience, so short the peregrination, that, from the rain on the west side, a man, in the space of four hours, will change to the opposite season, and find himself in sun-shine to the eastward.

When

* That is, they shall cut off from the cattle their usual retreat to the desert by taking possession of those places, and meeting them there where ordinarily they never come, and which therefore are the refuge of the cattle.

When Carthage was built, the carriage of this commercial city fell into the hands of Lehabim, or Lubim, the Libyan peasants, and became a great accession to the trade, power, and number of the shepherds. In countries to which there was no access by shipping, the end of navigation was nearly answered by the immense increase of camels; and this trade, we find, was carried on in the very earliest ages on the Arabian side, by the Ishmaelite merchants trading to Palestine and Syria, from the south end of the peninsula, with camels. This we learn particularly from Genesis, they brought myrrh and spices, or pepper, and sold them for silver; they had also balm, or balsam, but this it seems, in those days, they brought from Gilead.

We are sorry, in reading this curious anecdote preserved to us in scripture, to find in those early ages of the India trade, that another species of commerce was closely connected with it, which modern philanthropy has branded as the disgrace of human nature. It is plain, from the passage, the commerce of selling men was then universally established. Joseph* is bought as readily, and sold as currently immediately after, as any ox or camel could be at this day. Three nations, Javan, Tubal, and Meshech †, are mentioned as having their principal trade at Tyre in the selling of men; and, as late as St. John's time ‡, this is mentioned as a principal part of the trade of Babylon; notwithstanding which, no prohibition from God, or censure from the prophets, have ever stigmatized it either

as

* Gen. chap. xxxvii. ver. 25. 28. † Ezek. chap. xxvii. ver. 13. ‡ Rev. chap. xviii. ver. 13.

irreligious or immoral; on the contrary, it is always spoken of as favourably as any species of commerce whatever. For this, and many other reasons which I could mention, I cannot think, that purchasing slaves is, in itself, either cruel or unnatural. To purchase any living creature to abuse it afterwards, is certainly both base and criminal; and the crime becomes still of a deeper dye, when our fellow-creatures come to be the sufferers. But, although this is an abuse which accidentally follows the trade, it is no necessary part of the trade itself; and, it is against this abuse the wisdom of the legislature should be directed, not against the trade itself.

On the eastern side of the peninsula of Africa, many thousand slaves are sold to Asia, perfectly in the same manner as those on the west side are sent to the West Indies; but no one, that ever I heard, has as yet opened his mouth against the sale of Africans to the East Indies; and yet there is an aggravation in this last sale of slaves that should touch us much more than the other, where no such additional grievance can be pretended. The slaves sold into Asia are most of them Christians; they are sold to Mahometans, and, with their liberty, they are certainly deprived of their religion likewise. But the treatment of the Asiatics being much more humane than what the Africans, sold to the West Indies, meet with, no clamour has yet been raised against this commerce in Asia, because its only bad consequence is apostacy; a proof to me that religion has no part in the present dispute, or, as I have said, it is the abuse that accidentally follows the purchasing of slaves, not the trade itself, that should be considered as the grievance. It

It is plain from all history, that two abominable practices, the one the eating of men, the other of sacrificing them to the devil, prevailed all over Africa. The India trade, as we have seen in very early ages, first established the buying and selling of slaves; since that time, the eating of men, or sacrificing them, has so greatly decreased on the eastern side of the peninsula, that now we scarcely hear of an instance of either of these that can be properly vouched. On the western part, towards the Atlantic Ocean, where the sale of slaves began a considerable time later, after the discovery of America and the West Indies, both of these horrid practices are, as it were, general, though, I am told, less so to the northward since that event.

There is still alive a man of the name of Matthews, who was present at one of those bloody banquets on the west of Africa, to the northward of Senega. It is probable the continuation of the slave-trade would have abolished these, in time, on the west side also. Many other reasons could be alleged, did my plan permit it. But I shall content myself at present, with saying, that I very much fear that a relaxation and effeminacy of manners, rather than genuine tenderness of heart, has been the cause of this violent paroxysm of philanthropy, and of some other measures adopted of late to the discouragement of discipline, which I do not doubt will soon be felt to contribute their mite to the decay both of trade and navigation that will necessarily follow.

The Ethiopian shepherds at first carried on the trade on their own side of the Red Sea; they carried their India commodities to Thebes, likewise to
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the different black nations to the south-west ; in return, they brought back gold, probably at a cheaper rate, because certainly by a shorter carriage than by that from Ophir.

Thebes became exceedingly rich and proud, though, by the most extensive area that ever was assigned to it, it never could be either large or populous. Thebes is not mentioned in scripture by that name; it was destroyed before the days of Moses by Salatis prince of the Agaazi, or Ethiopian shepherds ; at this day it has assumed a name very like the ancient one. The first signification of its name, Medinet Tabu, I thought was the Town of our Father. This, history says, was given it by Sesostris in honour of his father ; in the ancient language, its name was *Ammon No.* The next that presented itself was Theba, which was the Hebrew name for the Ark when Noah was ordered to build it—Thou shalt “ make thee an Ark (Theba) of gopher-wood *.”

The figure of the temples in Thebes do not seem to be far removed from the idea given us of the Ark. The third conjecture is, that being the first city built and supported on pillars, and, on different and separate pieces of stone, it got its name from the architect's first expression of approbation or surprise, Tabu, that it stood insulated and alone, and this seems to me to be the most conformable both to the Hebrew and Ethiopic.

The shepherds, for the most part, friends and allies of the Egyptians, or Cushite, at times were enemies to them. We need not, at this time of
day,

* Gen. vi. 14.

day, seek the cause; there are many very apparent, from opposite manners, and, above all, the difference in the dietetique regimen. The Egyptians worshipped the cow, the Shepherds killed and ate her. The Shepherds were Sabeans, worshipping the host of heaven—the sun, moon, and stars. Immediately upon the building of Thebes and the perfection of sculpture, idolatry and the grossest materialism greatly corrupted the more pure and speculative religion of the Sabeans. Soon after the building of Thebes, we see that Rachel, Abraham's wife, had idols *; we need seek no other probable cause of the devastation that followed, than difference of religion.

Thebes was destroyed by Salatis, who overturned the first Dynasty of Cushite, or Egyptian kings, begun by Menes, in what is called the second age of the world, and founded the first Dynasty of the Shepherds, who behaved very cruelly, and wrested the lands from their first owners; and it was this Dynasty that Sesostris destroyed, after calling Thebes by his father's name, Ammon No, making those decorations that we have seen of the harp in the sepulchres on the west, and building Diospolis on the opposite side of the river. The second conquest of Egypt by the Shepherds was that under Sabaco, by whom it has been imagined Thebes was destroyed, in the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah, who is said to have made peace with So † king of Egypt, as the translator has called him, mistaking So for the name of the king, whereas it only denoted his quality of shepherd.

From

* Gen. xxxv. 4.

† 2 Kings, xvii. 4.

From this it is plain, all that the scripture mentions about Ammon No, applies to Diospolis on the other side of the river. Ammon No and Diospolis, though they were on different sides of the river, were considered as one city, thro' which the Nile flowed, dividing it into two parts. This is plain from profane history, as well as from the prophet Nahum *, who describes it very exactly, if in place of the word *sea* was substituted *river*, as it ought to be.

There was a third invasion of the Shepherds after the building of Memphis, where a † king of Egypt ‡ is said to have inclosed two hundred and forty thousand of them in a city called *Abaris*; they surrendered upon capitulation, and were banished the country into the land of Canaan. That two hundred and forty thousand men should be inclosed in one city, so as to bear a siege, seems to me extremely improbable; but be it so, all that it can mean is, that Memphis, built in Lower Egypt near the Delta, had war with the Shepherds of the Isthmus of Suez, or the districts near them, as those of Thebes had before with the Shepherds of the Thebaid. But, however much has been written upon the subject, the total expulsion of the Shepherds at any one time by any King of Egypt, or at any one place, must be fabulous, as they have remained in their ancient seats, and do remain to this day; perhaps in not so great a number as when the India trade was carried on by the Arabian Gulf,

VOL. II.

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yet

* Nahum, chap. iii. 8. † Mispragmuthosis.

‡ Manethon, apud Josephum. Apion, lib. i. p. 460.

yet still in greater numbers than any other nation of the Continent.

The mountains which the Agaazi inhabit, are called *Habab*, from which it comes, that they themselves have got that name. *Habab*, in their language, and in Arabic likewise, signifies a *serpent*, and this I suppose explains that historical fable in the book of Axum, which says, a serpent conquered the province of Tigré, and reigned there.

It may be asked, Is there no other people that inhabit Abyssinia, but these two nations, the Cushites and the Shepherds? Are there no other nations, whiter or fairer than them, living to the southward of the Agaazi? Whence did these come? At what time, and by what name are they called? To this I answer, That there are various nations which agree with this description, who have each a particular name, and who are all known by that of *Habesh*, in Latin *Convenæ*, signifying a number of distinct people meeting accidentally in one place. The word has been greatly misunderstood, and misapplied, both by Scaliger and Ludolf, and a number of others; but nothing is more consonant to the history of the country than the translation I have given it, nor will the word itself bear any other.

The Chronicle of Axum, the most ancient repository of the antiquities of that country, a book esteemed, I shall not say how properly, as the first in authority after the holy scriptures, says, that between the creation of the world and the birth of our Saviour there were 5500 years *; that Abyssinia had

* Eight years less than the Greeks and other followers of the Septuagint.

had never been inhabited till 1808 years before Christ; and 200 years after that, which was in the 1600, it was laid waste by a flood, the face of the country much changed and deformed, so that it was denominated at that time Ourè Midre, or, *the country laid waste*, or, as it is called in scripture itself, a land which the waters or floods had spoiled †; that about the 1400 year before Christ it was taken possession of by a variety of people speaking different languages, who, as they were in friendship with the Agaazi, or Shepherds, possessing the high country of Tigre, came and sat down beside them in a peaceable manner, each occupying the lands that were before him. This settlement is what the Chronicle of Axum calls *Angaba*, the entry and establishment of these nations, which finished the peopling of Abyssinia.

Tradition further says, that they came from Palestine. All this seems to me to wear the face of truth. Some time after the year 1500, we know there happened a flood which occasioned great devastation. Pausanius says, that this flood happened in Ethiopia in the reign of Cecrops; and, about the 1490 before Christ, the Israelites entered the land of promise, under Caleb and Joshua. We are not to wonder at the great impression that invasion made upon the minds of the inhabitants of Palestine. We see by the history of the harlot, that the different nations had been long informed by prophecies, current and credited among themselves, that they were to be extirpated before the face of

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† Isaiah, chap. xviii. ver. 2.

the Israelites, who for some time had been hovering about their frontiers. But now when Joshua had passed the Jordan, after having miraculously dried up the river * before his army had invaded Canaan, and had taken and destroyed Jericho, a panic seized the whole people of Syria and Palestine.

These petty states, many in number, and who had all different languages, seeing a conqueror with an immense army already in possession of part of their country, and who did not conduct himself according to the laws of other conquerors, but put the vanquished under saws and harrows of iron, and destroyed the men, women, and children, and sometimes even the cattle, by the sword, no longer could think of waiting the arrival of such an enemy, but sought for safety by speedy flight or emigration. The Shepherds in Abyssinia and Atbara were the most natural refuge these fugitives could seek; commerce must have long made them acquainted with each others manners, and they must have been already entitled to the rights of hospitality by having often passed through each other's country.

Procopius † mentions that two pillars were standing in his time on the coast of Mauritania, opposite to Gibraltar, upon which were inscriptions in the Phœnician tongue: " We are Canaanites, flying from the face of Joshua, the son of Nun, the *robber*:" A character they naturally gave him from the ferocity and violence of his manners.

Now,

* Joshua, iii. 16. † Procop. de bello vind. lib. 2. cap. 10.

† A Moorish author, Ibn el Raquique, says, this inscription was on a stone on a mountain at Carthage. Marmol. lib. ap. 25.

Gleez

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 ዓዘ፡ ስፍረትኪ፡ ከሎኪሎ፡ ስፍወ፡፡፡፡ ጸዓቅብኪ፡ ፂረኒ፡ ዘክፋቀራት፡
 ፅፋረትክ፡ ዘተወወጠ፡ ስጦጢ፡ ወበ ኒፋሰ፡ ስይ፡ ትረኢ፡ ወክይ፡
 ክኒተዝ፡ ዳፍገል፡ ስፋቅራክ፡ ወሰ ኑሰሰብ፡ ጊዜ፡ ቅጥር፡ ከጦ፡ ጸይኪ
 ሐበክ፡ ዳኒኒ፡ በጦዓዘ፡ ፅፋራትክ፡ ኒ፡ ክኒዘ፡ ክኒጌ፡ ወስተጦርክ
 ኒ፡ ወፅ፡ ክብክኒ፡ ኒጥሠ፡ ወሰተ፡ ዩ፡ ክልክኒ፡ ስጦ፡ ጸይጸጦርኪ፡
 ጸናሐ ፡፡ ኒተፋሀክ፡ ወኒተሐወይ፡ ዩክኪ፡ ወይይት፡ ለጥክክት፡ ዩ
 ብክ፡ ኒፋቅር፡ ለጥበትኪ፡ ስጦወይ ኪ፡ ክኒ፡ ወሰተ፡ ስኪ፡ ዩ፡ ለ
 ኒ፡ ወርቆ፡ ስፋትናትኪ፡ ጸሰ፡ ወዓ፡፡፡፡ ወረክይ፡ ወሐጥ፡ ስጦ
 ክኒ፡ ወወይይት፡ ስጦክወልይ፡ ኪይ፡ ለኪ፡ ወስተ፡ ክፀዳይ፡ ዩ፡ ለ
 ስሎ፡፡፡፡ ከጦ፡ ጸጸክለት፡ ዩይር፡ ወ ዩሎት፡፡፡፡ ለፈረይ፡ ወስኪ፡ ገለት፡
 ሐይጦት፡ ስሎ፡፡፡፡ ኪት፡ ስጦ፡፡፡፡ ያይ፡፡፡፡ ክስተ፡ ዩስልኪ፡ ክኒተ፡
 ክሰ፡ ስኒ፡ ስጦ፡፡፡፡ ክስ፡ ኪናክ፡ ኒበ፡፡፡፡

Amhara

ይህ: ከጭደጭ: ያጧሲልሸ: ጭደጭ: ራ: ንቦሩ:: ጠቆራሽሀድ: አቅደኛ
 የአሎታኒ: ኔው:: ባሩ: አሰላም: ይ ፀሐይ: ከሰላሞንጭ: ሆኖት: ለጀቶ:
 ሰጭል:: ከወይኔ: ይልቅ: ጠቆሽ ሰለኔ: ተሸሎ:: ወይን ጠቆራ: ጠቆ:
 ኩ: ይሽ: ይሽጭ: የሰጭሽጭ: ጭ አደራኛ:: የድኔ: ወይኔ: አሌጠቆሀ
 ከሰቶ: ሁለ: ይሳላል:: በገጭ: የተ ጭ: ሌብደይ: የወደደችሀይ: ኔረኔጭ:
 ቅለቅለ: አጭህ: አደይ: ለቶ: የገጭ ወይት: ተሰጭራህ:: ወይት: ገተ
 ዳደጭል:: አሌህ: ጭደሰት: ወደደ ደሰህ:: በቅትር: ጊዜ:: አቅጠሰገገገ:
 ህ:: ሁቀላከኔ: ተሰጭላህ:: በሰቶ አደደሌጊጭ:: ከጊዜጀርጭጭ: ጭ
 ሀ: አቶ: ሰጭዳሰኔ:: ኔገጭ: ከጭ ጊጭ:: ራሰሰኔ: ከሰወቅሽ:: ከሽ
 ጊከው: አረከኔ:: ባደኛ: ደሰ: ይሰጭ ጭ: የጭጭጭ: የጭጭጭ:
 ለጭ ጠቆተሰኔ: ከወይኔ: ይልቅ: ከኔ ሰሰጭ: ቅተሰሰጭ: ወጭ:: የደሰሰጭ:
 ወደሰኔ:: አደተኔ: ጭደደጭ: ቅኔ: ተሰኔ: ጭጭ: ጭጭ:: በጊደጭ:
 ኔጊጭ: ኔው:: ከየራሳሎጭ: ጭጭጭ: በተ: የሰኔ:: ራደኛ: የራደኛ: ራ
 ይልቅ: ጠቆራሽሀድ:: ከኔደ: ከገሰ: ጊሰ: ሰጊጊጊጊ: የራደኛ: ሰጊ
 ጭ: ከኔደ: ሰሰጭጭ: ደደደኔ: ከጭ ጊሰ

Now, if what these inscriptions contain is true, it is much more credible, that the different nations, emigrating at that time, should seek their safety near hand among their friends, rather than go to an immense distance to Mauritania, to risk a precarious reception among strangers, and perhaps that country not yet inhabited.

Upon viewing the several countries in which these nations have their settlements, it seems evident they were made by mutual consent, and in peace; they are not separated from each other by chains of mountains, or large and rapid rivers, but generally by small brooks, dry the greatest part of the year; by hillocks, or small mounds of earth, or imaginary lines traced to the top of some mountain at a distance; these boundaries have never been disputed or altered, but remain upon the old tradition to this day. These have all different languages, as we see from scripture all the petty states of Palestine had, but they have no letters, or written character, but the Geez, the character of the Cushite shepherd by whom they were first invented and used, as we shall see hereafter. I may add in further proof of their origin, that the curse* of Canaan seems to have followed them, they have obtained no principality, but served the kings of the Agaazi or Shepherds, have been hewers of wood and drawers of water, and so they still continue.

The first and most considerable of these nations settled in a province called *Ambara*; it was, at first coming, as little known as the others; but, upon a revolution in the country, the king fled to that province, and there the court staid many years, so that

* Gen. ix 25, 26, and 27. verses.

that the Geez, or language of the Shepherds, was dropt, and retained only in writing, and as a dead language; the sacred scriptures being in that language only, saved the Geez from going totally into disuse. The second were the Agows of Damot, one of the southern provinces of Abyssinia, where they are settled immediately upon the sources of the Nile. The third are the Agows of Lasta, or Tcheratz Agow, from Tchera, their principal habitation; theirs too is a separate language; they are Troglodytes that live in caverns, and seem to pay nearly the same worship to the Siris, or Tacazzè, that those of Damot pay to the Nile.

I take the old names of these two last-mentioned nations, to be sunk in the circumstances of this their new settlement, and to be a compound of two words Ag-oha, the Shepherds of the River, and I also imagine, that the idolatry they introduced in worship of the Nile, is a further proof that they came from Canaan, where they imbibed materialism in place of the pure Sabeian worship of the Shepherds, then the only religion of this part of Africa.

The fourth is a nation bordering upon the southern banks of the Nile near Damot. It calls itself Gafat, which signifies oppressed by violence, torn, expelled, or chased away by force. If we were to follow the idea arising merely from this name, we might be led to imagine, that these were part of the tribes torn from Solomon's son and successor, Rehoboam. This, however, we cannot do consistent with the faith to be kept by a historian with his reader. The evidence of the people themselves, and the tradition of the country, deny they ever
were

were Jews, or ever concerned with that colony, brought with Menileck and the queen of Saba, which established the Jewish hierarchy. They declare, that they are now Pagans, and ever were so; that they are partakers with their neighbours the Agows in the worship of the river Nile; the extent or particulars of which I cannot pretend to explain.—The fifth is a tribe, which, if we were to pay any attention to similitude of names, we should be apt to imagine we had found here in Africa a part of that great Gaulish nation so widely extended in Europe and Asia. A comparison of their languages with what we know exists of the former, cannot but be very curious.—These are the Galla, the most considerable of these nations, specimens of whose language I have cited. This word, in their own language, signifies *Shepherd**; they say that formerly they lived on the borders of the southern rains, within the southern tropic; and that, like these in Atbara, they were carriers between the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, and supplied the interior part of the peninsula with Indian commodities.

The history of this trade is unknown; it must have been little less ancient, and nearly as extensive as the trade to Egypt and Arabia. It probably suffered diminution, when the mines of Sofala were given up, soon after the discovery of the new world. The Portuguese found it still flourishing, when they
made

* These people likewise call themselves Agaazi, or Agagi, they have over-run the kingdom of Congo south of the Line, and on the Atlantic Ocean, as the Galla have done that part of the kingdom of Adel and Abyssinia, on the Eastern, or Indian Ocean. Purch. lib. ii. chap. 4. sect. 8.

made their first conquests upon that coast ; and they carry it on still in an obscure manner, but in the same tract to their settlements near Cape Negro on the western ocean. From these settlements would be the proper place to begin to explore the interior parts of the peninsula, on both sides of the southern tropic, as protection and assistance could probably be got through the whole course of it, and very little skill in language would be necessary.

When no employment was found for this multitude of men and cattle, they left their homes, and proceeding northward, they found themselves involved near the Line, in rainy, cold, and cloudy weather, where they scarcely ever saw the sun. Impatient of such a climate, they advanced still farther, till about the year 1537, they appeared in great numbers in the province of Bali, abandoning the care of camels for the breeding of horses. At present they are all cavalry. I avoid to say more of them in this place, as I shall be obliged to make frequent mention of them in the course of my narrative.

The Falasha, too, are a people of Abyssinia, having a particular language of their own; a specimen of which I have also published, as the history of the people seems to be curious. I do not, however, mean to say of them, more than of the Galla, that this was any part of those nations who fled from Palestine on the *invasion* of Joshua. For they are now, and ever were, Jews, and have traditions of their own as to their origin, and what reduced them to the present state of separation, as

we shall see hereafter, when I come to speak of the translation of the holy scripture.

In order to gratify such as are curious in the study and history of language, I, with great pains and difficulty, got the whole book of the Canticles translated into each of these languages, by priests esteemed the most versant in the language of each nation. As this barbarous polyglot is of too large a size to print, I have contented myself with copying six verses of the first chapter in each language; but the whole book is at the service of any person of learning that will bestow his time in studying it, and, for this purpose, I left it in the British Museum, under the direction of Sir Joseph Banks, and the Bishop of Carlisle.

These *Convenæ*, as we have observed, were called *Habesh*, a number of distinct nations meeting in one place. Scripture has given them a name, which, though it has been ill translated, is precisely *Convenæ*, both in the Ethiopic and Hebrew. Our English translator calls them the *mingled people**, whereas it should be the *separate nations*, who, though met and settled together, did not mingle, which is strictly *Convenæ*. The inhabitants then who possessed Abyssinia, from its southern boundary to the tropic of Cancer, or frontiers of Egypt, were the Cushites, or polished people, living in towns, first Troglodytes, having their habitations in caves. The next were the Shepherds; after these were the nations who, as we apprehend, came from Palestine—Amhara, Agow of Damot, Agow of Tchera, and Gafat.

Interpreters,

* Jerem. chap. xiii. ver. 23.—id. xxv. 14.—Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 5.

Interpreters, much less acquainted with the historical circumstances of these countries than the prophets, have, either from ignorance or inattention, occasioned an obscurity which otherwise did not arise from the text. All these people are alluded to in scripture by descriptions that cannot be mistaken. If they have occasioned doubts or difficulties, they are all to be laid at the door of the translators, chiefly the Septuagint. When Moses returned with his wife Zipporah, daughter of the sovereign of the Shepherds of Midian, carriers of the India trade from Saba into Palestine, and established near their principal mart Edom, in Idumea or Arabia, Aaron, and Miriam his sister, quarrelled with Moses, because he had married one who was, as the translator says, an Ethiopian *. There is no sense in this cause; Moses was a fugitive when he married Zipporah; she was a noble-woman, daughter of the priest of Midian, head of a people. She likewise, as it would seem, was a Jewess †, and more attentive, at that time, to the preservation of the precepts of the law, than Moses was himself; no-exception, then, could lie against Zipporah, as she was surely, in every view, Moses's superior. But if the translator had rendered it, that Aaron and Miriam had quarrelled with Moses, because he had married a *negro*, or *black-moor*, the reproach was evident; whatever intrinsic merit Zipporah might have been found to have possessed afterwards, she must have appeared before the people, at first sight, as a *strange* woman, or Gentile, whom it was

* Numb. xii. 1.

† Exod. iv. 25.

was prohibited to marry. Besides, the innate deformity of the complexion, negroes were, at all times, rather coveted for companions of men of luxury or pleasure, than sought after for wives of sober legislators, and governors of a people.

The next instance I shall give is, Zerah of Gerar*, who came to fight Afa king of Israel with an army of a million of men, and three hundred chariots, whilst both the quarrel and the decision are represented as immediate.

Gerar was a small district, producing only the Acacia or gum-arabic trees, from which it had its name; it had no water but what came from a few wells, part of which had been dug by Abraham †, after much strife with the people of the country, who sought to deprive him of them, as of a treasure.

Abraham and his brother Lot returning from Egypt, though poor shepherds, could not subsist there for want of food and water, and they separated accordingly, by consent ‡. Now it must be confessed, as it is not pretended there was any miracle here, that there is not a more unlikely tale in all Herodotus, than this must be allowed to be upon the footing of the translation. The translator calls Zerah an Ethiopian, which should either mean he dwelt in Arabia, as he really did, and this gave him no advantage, or else that he was a stranger, who originally came from the country above Egypt; and, either way, it would have been impossible, during his whole life-time, to have collected a million of men, one of the greatest armies that ever stood

* 2 Chron. chap. xiv. ver. 9. † Gen. chap. 21. ver. 30.

‡ Gen. chap. 13. ver. 6. and 9.

flood upon the face of the earth, nor could he have fed them though they had ate the whole trees that grew in his country, nor could he have given every hundredth man one drink of water in a day from all the wells he had in his country.

Here, then, is an obvious triumph for infidelity, because, as I have said, no supernatural means are pretended. But had it been translated, that Zerah was a *black-moor*, a *Cushite-negro*, and prince of the Cushites, that were carriers in the Isthmus, an Ethiopian shepherd, then the wonder ceased.—Twenty camels, employed to carry couriers upon them, might have procured that number of men to meet in a short space of time, and, as Zerah was the aggressor, he had time to choose when he should attack his enemy; every one of these shepherds carrying with them their provision of flour and water, as is their invariable custom, might have fought with Afa at Gerar, without eating a loaf of Zerah's bread, or drinking a pint of his water.

The next passage I shall mention is the following:
 “The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine*.”
 Here the several nations are distinctly and separately mentioned in their places, but the whole meaning of the passage would have been lost, had not the situation of these nations been perfectly known; or, had not the Sabeans been mentioned separately, for both the Sabeans and the Cushite were certainly Ethiopians. Now, the meaning of the verse is,
 that

* Isa. chap. xlv. ver. 14.

that the fruit of the agriculture of Egypt, which is wheat, the commodities of the negro, gold, silver, ivory, and perfumes, would be brought by the Sabean shepherds, their carriers, a nation of great power, which should join themselves with you.

Again, Ezekiel says, † “ And they shall know “ that I am the Lord, when I have set a fire in “ Egypt, and when all her helpers shall be destroyed.”—“ In that day shall messengers go forth “ from me in ships, to make the careless Ethiopians “ afraid.” Now, Nebuchadnezzar was to destroy Egypt ‡, from the frontiers of Palestine, to the mountains above Atbara, where the Cushite dwelt. Between this and Egypt is a great desert; the country beyond it, and on both sides, was possessed by half a million of men. The Cushite, or negro merchant, was secure under these circumstances from any insult by land, but they were open to the sea, and had no defender, and messengers, therefore, in ships or a fleet had easy access to them, to alarm and keep them at home, that they did not fall into danger by marching into Egypt against Nebuchadnezzar, or interrupting the service upon which God had sent him. But this does not appear from translating Cush, *Ethiopian*; the nearest Ethiopian to Nebuchadnezzar, the most powerful and capable of opposing him, were the Ethiopian shepherds of the Thebaid, and these were not accessible to ships; and the shepherds, so posted near to the scene of destruction to be committed by Nebuchadnezzar, were enemies to the Cushites living in towns, and they had repeatedly themselves destroyed

† Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 8 and 9. ‡ Ezek. chap. xxix. ver. 10.

destroyed them, and therefore had no temptation to be other than spectators.

In several other places, the same prophet speaks of Cush as the commercial nation, sympathizing with their countrymen dwelling in the towns in Egypt, independent of the shepherds, who were really their enemies, both in civil and religious matters. “ And the sword shall come upon “ Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when “ the slain shall fall in Egypt *.” Now Ethiopia, as I have before said, that is, the low country of the shepherds, nearest Egypt, had no common cause with the Cushites that lived in towns there; it was their countrymen, the Cushites in Ethiopia, who mourned for those that fell in Egypt, who were merchants, traders, and dwelt in cities like themselves.

I shall mention but one instance more: “ Can the “ Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his “ spots? †” Here Cush is rendered Ethiopian, and many Ethiopians being white, it does not appear why they should be fixed upon, or chosen for the question more than other people. But had Cush been translated Negro, or Black-moor, the question would have been very easily understood, Can the negro change his skin, or the leopard his spots?

Jeremiah ‡ speaks of the chiefs of the mingled people that dwell in the deserts. And Ezekiel § also mentions them independent of all the others, whether Shepherds, or Cushites, or Libyans their neighbours, by the name of the Mingled People.

Isaiah

* Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 4.

† Jerem. chap. xiii. ver. 23.

‡ Jerem. chap. xxv. ver. 24.

§ Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 5.

Isaiah * calls them “ a nation scattered and peeled ;
 “ a people terrible from their beginning hitherto ;
 “ a nation meted out and trodden down, whose
 “ land the rivers have spoiled :” which is a suffi-
 cient description of them, as having been expelled
 their own country, and settled in one that had suf-
 fered greatly by a deluge a short time before.

* Isa. chap. xviii. ver. 2.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Origin of Characters or Letters—Ethiopic the first Language—How and why the Hebrew Letter was formed.

THE reader will observe what I have already said concerning the language of Habesh, or the Mingled nations, that they have not characters of their own; but when written, which is very seldom, it must be by using the Geez alphabet. Kircher, however, says, there are two characters to be found in Abyffinia; one he calls the Sacred Old Syrian, the other the Vulgar, or Common Geez character, of which we are now speaking. But this is certainly a mistake; there never was, that I know, but two original characters which obtained in Egypt. The first was the Geez, the second the Saitic, and both these were the oldest characters in the world, and both derived from hieroglyphics.

Although it is impossible to avoid saying something here of the origin of languages, the reader must not expect that I should go very deep into the fashionable opinions concerning them, or believe that all the old deities of the Pagan nations were the patriarchs of the Old Testament. With all respect to Sanchoniatho and his followers, I can no more believe that Ofiris, the first king of Egypt, was a real personage, and that Tot was his secretary, than I can believe Saturn to be the patriarch Abraham,

ham,

ham, and Rachel and Leah, Venus and Minerva. I will not fatigue the reader with a detail of useless reasons; if Osiris is a real personage, if he was king of Egypt, and Tot his secretary, they surely travelled to very good purpose, as all the people of Europe and Asia seem to be agreed, that in person they first communicated letters and the art of writing to them, but at very different, and very distant periods.

Thebes was built by a colony of Ethiopians from Siré, the city of Seir, or the Dog Star. Diodorus Siculus says, that the Greeks, by putting O before Siris, had made the word unintelligible to the Egyptians: Siris, then, was Osiris; but he was not the Sun, no more than he was Abraham, nor was he a real personage. He was Syrius, or the dog-star, designed under the figure of a dog, because of the warning he gave to Atbara, where the first observations were made at his heliacal rising, or his disengaging himself from the rays of the sun, so as to be visible to the naked eye. He was the Latrator Anubis, and his first appearance was figuratively compared to the barking of a dog, by the warning it gave to prepare for the approaching inundation. I believe, therefore, this was the first hieroglyphic; and that Isis, Osiris, and Tot, were all after inventions relating to it; and in saying this, I am so far warranted, because there is not in Axum (once a large city) any other hieroglyphic but of the dog-star, as far as I can judge from the huge fragments of figures of this animal, remains of which, in different postures, are still distinctly to be seen upon the pedestals everywhere among the ruins.

It is not to be doubted, that hieroglyphics then, but not astronomy, were invented at Thebes, where the theory of the dog-star was particularly investigated, because connected with their rural year. Ptolemy* has preserved us an observation of an heliacal rising of Sirius on the 4th day after the summer solstice, which answers to the 2250 year before Christ; and there are great reasons to believe the Thebans were good practical astronomers long before that period †; early, as it may be thought, this gives to Thebes a much greater antiquity than does the chronicle of Axum just cited.

As such observations were to be of service for ever, they became more valuable and useful in proportion to their priority. The most ancient of them would be of use to the astronomers of this day, for Sir Isaac Newton appeals to these of Chiron the Centaur. Equations may indeed be discovered in a number of centuries, which, by reason of the smallness of their quantities, may very probably have escaped the most attentive and scrupulous care of two or three generations; and many alterations in the starry firmament, old stars being nearly extinguished, and new emerging, would appear from a comparative state of the heavens made for a series of ages. And a Theban *Herschel* ‡ would have given us the history of planets he then observed, which, after appearing for ages, are now visible no more, or have taken a different form.

The dial, or gold circle of Osimandyas, shews what an immense progress they had made in astronomy

* Uranologion. P. Petau. † Banbridge, Ann. caniculi.

‡ An astronomer greatly above my praise.

mony in so little time. This, too, is a proof of an early fall and revival of the arts in Egypt, for the knowledge and use of Armillæ had been lost with the destruction of Thebes, and were not again discovered, that is, revived, till the reign of Ptolemy Soter, 300 years before the Christian æra. I consider that immense quantity of hieroglyphics, with which the walls of the temples, and faces of the obelisks, are covered, as containing so many astronomical observations.

I look upon these as the ephemerides of some thousand years, and that sufficiently accounts for their number. Their date and accuracy were indisputable; they were exhibited in the most public places, to be consulted as occasion required; and by the deepness of the engraving, and hardness of the materials, and the thickness and solidity of the block itself upon which they were carved, they bade defiance at once to violence and time.

I know that most of the learned writers are of sentiments very different from mine in these respects. They look for mysteries and hidden meanings, moral and philosophical treatises, as the subjects of these hieroglyphics. A sceptre, they say, is the hieroglyphic of a king. But where do we meet a sceptre upon an antique Egyptian monument? or who told us this was an emblem of royalty among the Egyptians at the time of the first invention of this figurative writing? Again, the serpent with the tail in its mouth denotes the eternity of God, that he is without beginning and without end. This is a Christian truth, and a Christian belief, but no where to be found in the polytheism of the inventors

of hieroglyphics. Was Cronos or Ouranus without beginning and without end? Was this the case with Osiris and Tot, whose fathers and mothers births and marriages are known? If this was a truth, independent of revelation, and imprinted from the beginning in the minds of men; if it was destined to be an eternal truth, which must have appeared by every man finding it in his own breast, from the beginning, how unnecessary must the trouble have been to write a common known truth like this, at the expence of six weeks labour, upon a table of porphyry or granite.

It is not with philosophy as with astronomy; the older the observations, the more use they are of to posterity. A lecture of an Egyptian priest upon divinity, morality, or natural history, would not pay the trouble, at this day, of engraving it upon stone; and one of the reasons that I think no such subjects were ever treated in hieroglyphics is, that in all those I ever had an opportunity of seeing, and very few people have seen more, I have constantly found the same figures repeated, which obviously, and without dispute, allude to the history of the Nile, and its different periods of increase, the mode of measuring it, the Etesian winds; in short, such observations as we every day see in an almanack, in which we cannot suppose, that forsaking the obvious import, where the good they did was evident, they should ascribe different meanings to the hieroglyphic, to which no key has been left, and therefore their future inutility must have been foreseen.

I shall content myself in this wide field, to fix upon one famous hieroglyphical personage, which is

Tot,

Tot, the secretary of Osiris, whose function I shall endeavour to explain; if I fail, I am in good company; I give it only as my opinion, and submit it cheerfully to the correction of others. The word *Tot* is Ethiopic, and there can be little doubt it means the dog-star. It was the name given to the first month of the Egyptian year. The meaning of the name, in the language of the province of Sirè, is an *idol*, composed of different heterogeneous pieces; it is found having this signification in many of their books. Thus a naked man is not a *Tot*, but the body of a naked man, with a dog's head, an ass's head, or a serpent instead of a head, is a *Tot*. According to the import of that word, it is I suppose, an almanack, or section of the phænomena in the heavens which are to happen in the limited time it is made to comprehend, when exposed for the information of the public; and the more extensive its use is intended to be, the greater number of emblems, or signs of observation, it is charged with.

Besides many other emblems or figures, the common *Tot*, I think, has in his hand a cross with a handle, as it is called *Crux Ansata*, which has occasioned great speculation among the decyphers. This cross, fixed to a circle, is supposed to denote the *four elements*, and to be the symbol of the influence the sun has over them. Jamblichus* records, that this cross, in the hand of *Tot*, is the name of the *divine Being* that travels through the world. Sozomen† thinks it means the *life to come*,
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* Jamblich. de Myst. sect. 8. cap. 5.

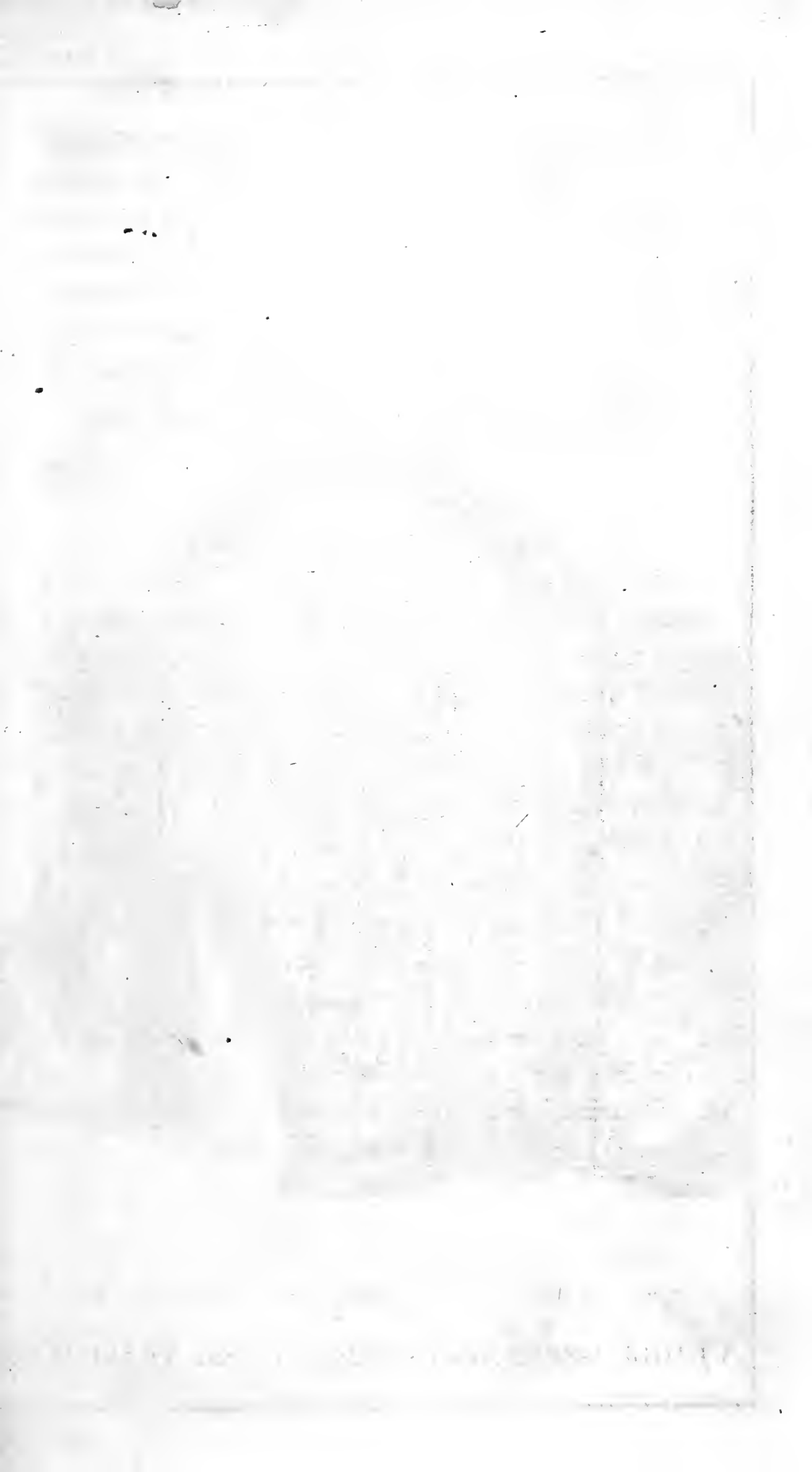
† Sozomen, Eccles. Hist. lib. 7. cap. 15.

the same with the ineffable image of eternity. Others, strange difference! say it is the *phallus*, or human genitals, while a later * writer maintains it to be the mariner's compass. My opinion, on the contrary is, that, as this figure was exposed to the public for the reason I have mentioned, the *Crux Anata* in his hand was nothing else but a monogram of his own name TO, and $\overset{\circ}{\text{TT}}$ signifying TOT, or as we write Almanack upon a collection published for the same purpose.

The changing of these emblems, and the multitude of them, produced the necessity of contracting their size, and this again a consequential alteration in the original forms; and a stile, or small portable instrument, became all that was necessary for finishing these small *Tots*, instead of a large graver or carving tool, employed in making the large ones. But men, at last, were so much used to the alteration, as to know it better than under its primitive form, and the engraving became what we may call the first elements, or root, in preference to the original.

The reader will see, that, in my history of the civil wars in Abyssinia, the king, forced by rebellion to retire to the province of Tigré, and being at Axum, found a stone covered with hieroglyphics, which, by the many inquiries I made after inscriptions, and some conversations I had had with him, he guessed was of the kind which I wanted. Full of that princely goodness and condescension that he ever honoured me with, throughout my whole stay,

* Herw. theolog. Ethnica, p. 11.





N.º 2

A TABLE OF *HIEROGLYPHICS*, FOUND AT AXUM 1771.

stay, he brought it with him when he returned from Tigré, and was restored to his throne at Gondar.

It seems to me to be one of those private Tots, or portable almanacks, of the most curious kind. The length of the whole stone is fourteen inches, and six inches broad, upon a base three inches high, projecting from the block itself, and covered with hieroglyphics. A naked figure of a man, near six inches, stands upon upon two crocodiles, their heads turned different ways. In each of his hands he holds two serpents, and a scorpion, all by the tail, and in the right hand hangs a noose, in which is suspended a ram or goat. On the left hand he holds a lion by the tail. The figure is in great relief; and the head of it with that kind of cap or ornament which is generally painted upon the head of the figure called Isis, but this figure is that of a man. On each side of the whole-length figure, and above it, upon the face of the stone where it projects, are marked a number of hieroglyphics of all kinds. Over this is a very remarkable representation; it is an old head, with very strong features, and a large bushy beard, and upon it a high cap ribbed or striped. This I take to be the Cnuph, or Animus Mundi, though Apuleus, with very little probability, says this was made in the likeness of no creature whatever. The back of the stone is divided into eight compartments *, from the top to the bottom, and these are filled with hieroglyphics

in

* I apprehend this is owing to the circumstances of the climate, in the four months, the time of the inundation, the heavens were so covered as to afford no observations to be recorded.

in the last stage, before they took the entire resemblance of letters. Many are perfectly formed; the *Crux Anfata* appears in one of the compartments, and *Tot* in another. Upon the edge, just above where it is broken, is 1119, so fair and perfect in form, that it might serve as an example of calligraphy, even in the present times; 45 and 19, and some other arithmetical figures, are found up and down among the hieroglyphics.

This I suppose was what formerly the Egyptians called a book, or almanack; a collection of these was probably hung up in some conspicuous place, to inform the public of the state of the heavens, and seasons, and diseases, to be expected in the course of them, as is the case in the English almanacks at this day. *Hermes* is said to have composed 36,535 books, probably of this sort, or they might contain the correspondent astronomical observations made in a certain time at *Meroë*, *Ophir*, *Axum*, or *Thebes*, communicated to be hung up for the use of the neighbouring cities. *Porphyry** gives a particular account of the Egyptian almanacks, “What is comprised in the Egyptian almanacks, says he, contains but a small part of the *Hermaic* institutions; all that relates to the rising and setting of the moon and planets, and of the stars and their influence, and also some advice upon diseases.”

It is very remarkable, that, besides my *Tot* here described, there are five or six, precisely the same in all respects, already in the *British Museum*; one of them, the largest of the whole, is made of *sycomore*, the others are of metal. There is another, I am told, in *Lord Shelburn's* collection; this I never

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* *Porphyry Epist. ad Anebonem.*

ver, had an opportunity of seeing ; but a very principal attention seems to have been paid to make all of them light and portable, and it would seem that by these having been formed so exactly similar, they were the Tots intended to be exposed in different cities or places, and were neither more nor less than Egyptian almanacks.

Whether letters were known to Noah before the flood, is no where said from any authority, and the inquiry into it is therefore useless. It is difficult, in my opinion, to imagine, that any society, engaged in different occupations, could subsist long without them. There seems to be less doubt, that they were invented, soon after the dispersion, long before Moses, and in common use among the Gentiles of his time.

It seems also probable, that the first alphabet was Ethiopic, first founded on hieroglyphics, and afterwards modelled into more current, and less laborious figures, for the sake of applying them to the expedition of business. Mr. Fourmont is so much of this opinion, that he says it is evident the three first letters of the Ethiopic alphabet are hieroglyphics yet, and that the Beta resembles the door of a house or temple. But, with great submission, the doors of houses and temples, when first built, were square at the top, for arches were not known. The Beta was taken from the doors of the first Troglodytes in the mountains, which were rounded, and gave the hint for turning the arch, when architecture advanced nearer to perfection.

Others are for giving to letters a divine original: they say they were taught to Abraham by God himself ;

himself; but this is no where vouched; though it cannot be denied, that it appears from scripture there were two sorts of characters known to Moses, when God spoke to him on Mount Sinai. The first two tables, we are told, were wrote by the finger of God, in what character is not said, but Moses received them to read to the people, so he surely understood them. But, when he had broken these two tables, and had another meeting with God on the mount on the subject of the law, God directs him specially not to write in the Egyptian character or hieroglyphics, but in the current hand used by the Ethiopian merchants, *like the letters* upon a signet; that is, he should not write in hieroglyphics by a *picture*, representing the *thing*, for that the law forbids; and the bad consequences of this were evident; but he should write the law in the current hand, by characters representing sounds, (though nothing else in heaven or on earth,) or by the letters that the Ishmaelites, Cushites, and India trading nations had long used in business for signing their invoices, engagements, &c. and this was the meaning of being *like the letters of a signet*.

Hence, it is very clear, that God did not invent letters, nor did Moses, who understood both characters before the promulgation of the law upon Mount Sinai, having learned them in Egypt, and during his long stay among the Cushites, and Shepherds in Arabia Petrea. Hence it should appear also, that the sacred character of the Egyptian was considered as profane, and forbid to the Hebrews, and that the common Ethiopic was the Hebrew sacred character, in which the copy of the law was
first

first wrote. The text is very clear and explicit: “ And the stones shall be with the *names* of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their *names, like* the engravings of a *signet*; every one with his *name*, shall they be according to the twelve tribes*.” Which is plainly, You shall not write in the way used till this day, for it leads the people into idolatry; you shall not type Judah by a *lion*, Zebulun by a *skip*, Issachar by an *ass* couching between two burdens; but, instead of writing by pictures, you shall take the other known hand, the merchants writing, which signifies *sounds*, not *things*; write the names Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, in the letters, such as the merchants use upon their signets. And, on Aaron’s breast-plate of pure gold, was to be written, in the same alphabet, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD †.

These signets, of the remotest antiquity in the East, are worn still upon every man’s hand to this day, having the name of the person that wears them, or some sentence upon it always religious. The Greeks, after the Egyptians, continued the other method, and described figures upon their signet; the use of both has been always common in Britain.

We find afterwards, that, in place of stone or gold, for greater convenience Moses wrote in a book, “ And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished ‡;”—

Although,

* Exod. chap. xxviii. ver. 21. † Exod. chap. xxviii. ver. 36.

‡ Deut. chap. xxxi. ver. 24.

Although, then, Moses certainly did not invent either, or any character, it is probable that he made two, perhaps more, alterations in the Ethiopic alphabet as it then stood, with a view to increase the difference still more between the writing then in use among the nations, and what he intended to be peculiar to the Jews. The first was altering the direction, and writing from right to left, whereas, the Ethiopian was, and is to this day, written from left to right, as was the hieroglyphical alphabet.* The second was taking away the points, which, from all times, must have existed and been, as it were, a part of the Ethiopic letters invented with them, and I do not see how it is possible it ever could have been read without them; so that, which way soever the dispute may turn concerning the antiquity of the application of the Masoretic points, the invention was no new one, but did exist as early as language was written. And I apprehend, that these alterations were very rapidly adopted after the writing of the law, and applied to the new character as it then stood; because, not long after, Moses was ordered to submit the law itself to the people, which would have been perfectly useless, had not reading and the character been familiar to them at that time.

It appears to me also, that the Ethiopic words were always separated, and could not run together, or be joined as the Hebrew, and that the running the words together into one must have been matter of choice in the Hebrew, to increase the difference in writing the two languages, as the contrary had been practised in the Ethiopian language. Though
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* Vide the hieroglyphics on the drawing of the stone.

there is really little resemblance between the Ethiopic and the Hebrew letters, and not much more between that and the Samaritan, yet I have a very great suspicion the languages were once much nearer a-kin than this disagreement of their alphabet promises, and, for this reason, that a very great number of words are found throughout the Old Testament that have really no root, nor can be derived from any Hebrew origin, and yet all have, in the Ethiopic, a plain, clear, unequivocal origin, to and from which they can be traced without force or difficulty.

I shall now finish what I have to say upon this subject, by observing, that the Ethiopic alphabet consists of twenty-six letters, each of these, by a virgula, or point annexed, varying in sound, so as to become, in effect, forty-two distinct letters. But I must further add, that at first they had but twenty-five of these original letters, the Latin P being wanting, so that they were obliged to substitute another letter in the place of it. Paulus, for example, they called Taulus, Oulus, or Caulus. Petros they pronounced Ketros. At last they substituted T, and added this to the end of their alphabet, giving it the force of P, though it was really a repetition of a character, rather than invention. Besides these there are twenty others of the nature of diphthongs, but I should suppose some of these are not of the same antiquity with the letters of the alphabet, but have been invented in later times by the scribes for convenience.

The reader will understand, that, speaking of the Ethiopic at present, I mean only the Geez language, the language of the Shepherds, and of the
books.

books. None of the other many languages spoken in Abyssinia have characters for writing. But when the Amharic became substituted, in common use and conversation, to the Geez, after the restoration of the Royal family, from their long banishment in Shoa, seven new characters were necessarily added to answer the pronunciation of this new language, but no book was ever yet written in any other language except Geez. On the contrary, there is an old law in this country, handed down by tradition only, that whoever should attempt to translate the holy scripture into Amharic, or any other language, his throat should be cut after the manner in which they kill sheep, his family sold to slavery, and his house razed to the ground; and, whether the fear of this law was true or fained, it was a great obstacle to me in getting those translations of the Song of Solomon made which I intend for specimens of the different languages of those distinct nations.

The Geez is exceedingly harsh and unharmonious. It is full of these two letters, D and T, on which an accent is put that nearly resembles stammering. Considering the small extent of sea that divides this country from Arabia, we are not to wonder that it has great affinity to the Arabic. It is not difficult to be acquired by those who understand any other of the oriental languages; and, for a reason I have given some time ago, that the roots of many Hebrew words are only to be found here, I think it absolutely necessary to all those that would obtain a critical skill in that language.

Wemmers, a Carmelite, has wrote a small Ethiopic dictionary in thin quarto, which, as far as it goes, has considerable merit; and I am told there are others of the same kind extant, written chiefly by Catholic priests. But by far the most copious, distinct, and best-digested work, is that of Job Ludolf, a German of great learning in the Eastern languages, and who has published a grammar and dictionary of the Geez in folio. This read with attention is more than sufficient to make any person of very moderate genius a great proficient in the Ethiopic language. He has likewise written a short essay towards a dictionary and grammar of the Amharic, which, considering the very small help he had, shews his surprizing talents and capacity. Much, however, remains still to do; and it is indeed scarcely possible to bring this to any tolerable degree of forwardness for want of books, unless a man of genius, while in the country itself, were to give his time and application to it: It is not much more difficult than the former, and less connected with the Hebrew or Arabic, but has a more harmonious pronunciation.

C H A P. IV.

Some Account of the Trade Winds and Monsoons—Application of this to the Voyage to Ophir and Tarshish.

IT is a matter of real affliction, which shews the vanity of all human attainments, that the preceding pages have been employed in describing, and, as it were, drawing from oblivion, the history of those very nations that first conveyed to the world, not the elements of literature only, but all sorts of learning, arts, and sciences in their full detail and perfection. We see that these had taken deep root, and were not easily extirpated. The first great and fatal blow they received was from the destruction of Thebes, and its monarchy, by the first invasion of the shepherds under Salatis, which shook them to the very foundation. The next was in the conquest of the Thebaid under Sabaco and his Shepherds. The third was when the empire of Lower Egypt (I do not think of the Thebaid) was transferred to Memphis, and that city taken, as writers say, by the Shepherds of Abaris only, or of the Delta, though it is scarcely probable, that, in so favourite a cause as the destruction of cities, the whole Shepherds did not lend their assistance.

These were the calamities, we may suppose, under which the arts in Egypt fell; for as to the foreign conquests of Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonians,

nians, they affected cities and the persons of individuals only. They were temporary, never intended to have lasting consequences; their beginning and end were prophesied at the same time. That of the Assyrians was a plundering expedition only, as we are told by scripture itself, intended to last but forty years *, half the life of man, given, for a particular purpose, for the indemnification of the king Nebuchadnezzar, for the hardships he sustained at the siege of Tyre, where the obstinacy of the inhabitants, in destroying their wealth, deprived the conqueror of his expected booty. The Babylonians were a people the most polished after the Egyptians. Egypt under them suffered by rapacity, but not by ignorance, as it did in all the conquests of the Shepherds.

After Thebes was destroyed by the first Shepherds commerce, and it is probable the arts with it, fled for a time from Egypt, and centered in Edom, a city and territory, tho' we know little of its history, at that period the richest in the world. David, in the very neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon, calls Edom the strong city; "Who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom †?" David, from an old quarrel, and probably from the recent indignities of the Tyrians his friends, invaded Edom †, destroyed the city, and dispersed the people. He was the great military power then upon the continent; Tyre and Edom were rivals; and his conquest of that last great and trading state, which he united to his em-

VOL. II.

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pire,

* Ezek. chap. xxix. ver. 11. † Psalm. chap. lx. ver. 9. and Psal. cviii. ver. 10. † 2 Sam. chap. viii. ver. 14. 1 King's chap. xi. ver. 15, 16.

pire, would yet have lost him the trade he sought to cultivate, by the very means he used to obtain it, had not Tyre been in a capacity to succeed to Edom, and collect its mariners and artificers, scattered abroad by the conquest.

David took possession of two ports, Eloth and Ezion-gaber *, from which he carried on the trade to Ophir and Tarshish, to a very great extent, to the day of his death. We are struck with astonishment when we reflect upon the sum that Prince received in so short a time from these mines of Ophir. For what is said to be given by King David † and his Princes for the building of the Temple of Jerusalem, exceeds in value eight hundred millions of our money, if the talent there spoken of is a Hebrew talent ‡, and not a weight of the same denomination, the value of which was less, and peculiarly reserved for and used in the traffic of these precious metals, gold and silver. It was, probably, an African or Indian weight, proper to the same mines, whence was gotten the gold appropriated to fine commodities only, as is the case with our ounce Troy different from the Averdupoise.

Solomon,

* 1 Kings, chap. ix. ver. 26. 2 Chron. chap. viii. ver. 17.

† 1 Chron. chap. xxii. ver. 14, 13, 16. Chap. xxix. ver. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.—Three thousand *Hebrew* talents of gold, reduced to our money, amount to twenty-one millions and six hundred thousand pounds Sterling.

‡ The value of a Hebrew talent appears from Exodus, chap. xxxviii. ver. 25, 26. For 603,550 persons being taxed at half a shekel each, they must have paid in the whole 301,775; now that sum is said to amount to 100 talents, 1775 shekels only; deduct the two latter sums, and there will remain 300,000, which, divided by 108, will leave 3000 shekels for each of these talents.

Solomon, who succeeded David in his kingdom, was his successor likewise in the friendship of Hiram king of Tyre. Solomon visited Eloth and Ezion-gaber* in person, and fortified them. He collected a number of pilots, shipwrights, and mariners, dispersed by his father's conquest of Edom, most of whom had taken refuge in Tyre and Sidon, the commercial states in the Mediterranean. Hiram supplied him with sailors in abundance; but the sailors so furnished from Tyre were not capable of performing the service which Solomon required, without the direction of pilots and mariners used to the navigation of the Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Such were those mariners who formerly lived in Edom, whom Solomon had now collected in Eloth and Ezion-gaber.

This last mentioned navigation was very different in all respects from that of the Mediterranean, which, in respect to the former, might be compared to a pond, every side being confined with shores little distant the one from the other; even that small extent of sea was so full of islands, that there was much greater art required in the pilot to avoid land than to reach it. It was, besides, subject to variable winds, being to the northward of 30° of latitude, the limits to which Providence hath confined those winds all over the globe; whereas the navigation of the Indian Ocean was governed by laws more convenient and regular, though altogether different from those that obtained in the Mediterranean. Before I proceed, it will be necessary to explain this phænomenon.

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It

* 2 Chron. chap. viii. ver. 17.

It is known to all those who are ever so little versant in the history of Egypt, that the wind from the north prevails in that valley all the summer months, and is called the *Etesian winds*; it sweeps the valley from north to south, that being the direction of Egypt, and of the Nile, which runs through the midst of it. The two chains of mountains, which confine Egypt on the east and on the west, constrain the wind to take this precise direction.

It is natural to suppose the same would be the case in the Arabian Gulf, had that narrow sea been in a direction parallel to the land of Egypt, or due north and south. The Arabian Gulf, however, or what we call the Red Sea, lies from nearly north-west to south-east, from Suez to Mocha. It then turns nearly east and west till it joins the Indian Ocean at the Straits of Babelmandeb, as we have already said, and may be further seen by consulting the map. Now, the Etesian winds, which are due north in Egypt, here take the direction of the Gulf, and blow in that direction steadily all the season, while it continues north in the valley of Egypt; that is, from April to October the wind blows north-west up the Arabian Gulf towards the Straits; and, from November till March, directly contrary, down the Arabian Gulf, from the Straits of Babelmandeb to Suez and the Isthmus.

These winds are by some corruptly called *the trade-winds*; but this name given to them is a very erroneous one, and apt to confound narratives, and make them unintelligible. A trade-wind is a wind which, all the year through, blows, and has ever blown, from the same point of the horizon; such

is the south-west, south of the Line, in the Indian and Pacific Ocean. On the contrary, these winds, of which we have now spoken, are called *monsoons*; each year they blow six months from the northward, and the other six months from the southward, in the Arabian Gulf: While in the Indian Ocean, without the Straits of Babelmandeb, they blow just the contrary at the same seasons; that is, in summer from the southward, and in winter from the northward, subject to a small inflexion to the east and to the west.

The reader will observe, then, that, a vessel sailing from Suez or the Euxine Gulf, in any of the summer months, will find a steady wind at north-west, which will carry it in the direction of the Gulf to Mocha. At Mocha, the coast is east and west to the Straits of Babelmandeb, so that the vessel from Mocha will have variable winds for a short space, but mostly westerly, and these will carry her on to the Straits. She is then done with the monsoon in the Gulf, which was from the north, and, being in the Indian Ocean, is taken up by the monsoon which blows in the summer months there, and is directly contrary to what obtains in the Gulf. This is a south-wester, which carries the vessel with a flowing sail to any part in India, without delay or impediment.

The same happens upon her return home. She sails in the winter months by the monsoon proper to that sea, that is, with a north-east, which carries her through the Straits of Babelmandeb. She finds, within the Gulf, a wind at south-east, directly contrary to what was in the ocean; but then her course
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is contrary likewise, so that a south-easter, answering to the direction of the Gulf, carries her directly to Suez, or the Elanitic Gulf, to whichever way she proposes going. Hitherto all is plain, simple, and easy to be understood; and this was the reason why, in the earliest ages, the India trade was carried on without difficulty.

Many doubts, however, have arisen about a port called *Ophir*, whence the immense quantities of gold and silver came, which were necessary at this time, when provision was making for building the Temple of Jerusalem. In what part of the world this *Ophir* was has not been yet agreed. Connected with this voyage, too, was one to Tarshish, which suffers the same difficulties; one and the same fleet performed them both in the same season.

In order to come to a certainty where this *Ophir* was, it will be necessary to examine what scripture says of it, and to keep precisely to every thing like description which we can find there, without indulging our fancy farther. *First*, then, the trade to *Ophir* was carried on from the Elanitic Gulf through the Indian Ocean. *Secondly*, The returns were gold, silver, and ivory, but especially silver*. *Thirdly*, The time of the going and coming of the fleet was precisely three years †, at no period more nor less.

Now, if Solomon's fleet sailed from the Elanitic Gulf to the Indian Ocean, this voyage of necessity must have been made by monsoons, for no other winds

* 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 22. † 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 22.
2 Chron. chap. ix. ver. 21.

winds reign in that ocean. And, what certainly shews this was the case, is the precise term of three years, in which the fleet went and came between Ophir and Ezion-gaber. For it is plain, so as to supersede the necessity of proof or argument, that, had this voyage been made with variable winds, no limited term of years ever could have been observed in its going and returning. The fleet might have returned from Ophir in two years, in three, four, or five years; but with variable winds, the return precisely in three years was not possible, whatever part of the globe Ophir might be situated in.

Neither Spain or Peru could be Ophir; part of these voyages must have been made by variable winds, and the return consequently uncertain. The island of Ceylon, in the East Indies, could not be Ophir; the voyage thither is indeed made by monsoons, but we have shewed that a year is all that can be spent in a voyage to the East Indies; besides, Ceylon has neither gold nor silver, though it has ivory. St. Domingo has neither gold, nor silver, nor ivory. When the Tyrians discovered Spain, they found a profusion of silver in huge masses, but this they brought to Tyre by the Mediterranean, and then sent it to the Red Sea over land to answer the returns from India. Tarshish, too, is not found to be a port in any of these voyages, so that part of the description fails, nor were there ever elephants bred in Spain.

These mines of Ophir were probably what furnished the East with gold in the earliest times; great traces of excavation must, therefore, have appeared; yet in none of the places just mention-

ed are there great remains of any mines that have been wrought. The ancient traces of silver-mines in Spain are not to be found, and there never were any of gold. John Dos Santos*, a Dominican friar, says, that on the coast of Africa, in the kingdom of Sofala, the main-land opposite to Madagascar, there are mines of gold and silver, than which none can be more abundant, especially in silver. They bear the traces of having been wrought from the earliest ages. They were actually open and working when the Portuguese conquered that part of the peninsula, and were probably given up since the discovery of the new world, rather from political than any other reasons.

John Dos Santos says, that he landed at Sofala in the year 1586; that he sailed up the great river Cuama as far as Tetè, where, always desirous to be in the neighbourhood of gold, his Order had placed their convent. Thence he penetrated for above two hundred leagues into the country, and saw the gold mines then working, at a mountain called Afura †. At a considerable distance from these are the silver mines of Chicoua; at both places there is great appearance of ancient excavations; and at both places the houses of the kings are built with mud and straw, whilst there are large remains of massy buildings of stone and lime.

It is a tradition which generally obtains in that country, that these works belonged to the Queen of Saba, and were built at the time, and for the purpose of

* Vid. Voyage of Dos Santos, published by Le Grande.

† See the map of this voyage.

of the trade on the Red Sea: this tradition is common to all the Cafrs in that country. Eupolemus, an ancient author quoted by Eusebius *, speaking of David, says, that he built ships at Eloth, a city in Arabia, and thence sent miners, or, as he calls them, *metal-men*, to Orphi, or Ophir, an island in the Red Sea. Now, by the Red Sea, he understands the Indian Ocean †; and by Orphi, he probably meant the island of Madagascar; or Orphi (or Ophir) might have been the name of the Continent, instead of Sofala, that is, Sofala where the mines are might have been the main-land of Orphi.

The kings of the isles are often mentioned in this voyage; Socotra, Madagascar, the Commorras, and many other small islands thereabout, are probably those the scripture calls the *Isles*. All, then, at last reduces itself to the finding a place, either Sofala, or any other place adjoining to it, which avowedly can furnish gold, silver, and ivory in quantity, as large tokens of ancient excavations, and is at the same time under such restrictions from monsoons, that three years are absolutely necessary to perform the voyage, that it needs no more, and cannot be done in less, and this is Ophir.

Let us now try these mines of Dos Santos by the laws of the monsoons, which we have already laid down in describing the voyage to India. The fleet, or ship, for Sofala, parting in June from Ezion-gaber,

* Apud Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. 9.

† Dionysii Periegesis, ver. 38. and Coment. Eustathii in eundem. Strabo, lib. 16. p. 765. Agathemeri Geographia, lib. 2. cap. 11.

gaber, would run down before the northern monsoon to Mocha. Here, not the monsoon, but the direction of the Gulf changes, and the violence of the south-westers, which then reign in the Indian Ocean, make themselves at times felt even in Mocha Roads. The vessel therefore comes to an anchor in the harbour of Mocha, and here she waits for moderate weather and a fair wind, which carries her out of the Straits of Babelmandeb, through the few leagues where the wind is variable. If her course was now to the East Indies, that is east-north-east, or north-east and by north, she would find a strong south-west wind that would carry her to any part of India, as soon as she cleared Cape Gardesan, to which she was bound.

But matters are widely different if she is bound for Sofala; her course is nearly south-west, and she meets at Cape Gardesan a strong south-wester that blows directly in her teeth. Being obliged to return into the gulf, she mistakes this for a trade-wind; because she is not able to make her voyage to Mocha but by the summer monsoon, which carries her no farther than the Straits of Babelmandeb, and then leaves her in the face of a contrary wind, a strong current to the northward, and violent swell.

The attempting this voyage with sails, in these circumstances, was absolutely impossible, as their vessels went only before the wind: if it was performed at all, it must have been by oars *, and great havock and loss of men must have been the consequence

* Ezek. chap. xxvii. ver. 6.

quence of the several trials. This is not conjecture only; the prophet Ezekiel describes the very fact. Speaking of the Tyrian voyages, probably of this very one, he says, “Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters (the ocean): the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas*.” In short, the east, that is the north-east wind, was the very monsoon that was to carry them to Sofala, yet having no fails, being upon a lee-shore, a very bold coast, and great swell, it was absolutely impossible with oars to save themselves from destruction.

At last philosophy and observation, together with the unwearied perseverance of man bent upon his own views and interest, removed these difficulties, and shewed the mariners of the Arabian Gulf that these periodical winds, which, in the beginning, they looked upon as invincible barriers to the trading to Sofala, when once understood, were the very means of performing this voyage safely and expeditiously.

The vessel trading to Sofala failed, as I have said, from the bottom of the Arabian Gulf in summer, with the monsoon at north, which carried her to Mocha. There the monsoon failed her by the change of the direction of the Gulf. The south-west winds which blow without Cape Gardesfan in the Indian Ocean, forced themselves round the Cape so as to be felt in the road of Mocha, and make it uneasy riding there. But these soon changed, the weather became moderate, and the vessel, I suppose in the month of August, was safe at anchor under Cape Gardesfan,

* Ezek. chap. xxvii. ver. 26.

Gardefan, where was the port which, many years afterwards, was called Promontorium Aromatum. Here the ship was obliged to stay all November, because all these summers months the wind south of the Cape was a strong south-wester, as hath been before said, directly in the teeth of the voyage to Sofala. But this time was not lost; part of the goods bought to be ready for the return was ivory, frankincense, and myrrh; and the ship was then at the principal mart for these.

I suppose in November the vessel sailed with the wind at north-east, with which she would soon have made her voyage: But off the coast of Melinda, in the beginning of December, she there met an anomalous monsoon at south-west, in our days first observed by Dr. Halley, which cut off her voyage to Sofala, and obliged her to put into the small harbour of *Mocha*, near Melinda, but nearer still to Tarshish, which we find here by accident, and which we think a strong corroboration that we are right as to the rest of the voyage. In the annals of Abyssinia, we see that Amda Sion, making war upon that coast in the 14th century, in a list of the rebellious Moorish vassals, mentions the Chief of Tarshish as one of them, in the very situation where we have now placed him.

Solomon's vessel then, was obliged to stay at Tarshish till the month of April of the second year. In May, the wind set in at north-east, and probably carried her that same month to Sofala. All the time she spent at Tarshish was not lost, for part of her cargo was to be brought from that place, and she probably bought, bespoke, or left it there.

From

From May of the second year, to the end of that monsoon in October, the vessel could not stir; the wind was north-east. But this time, far from being lost, was necessary to the traders for getting in their cargo, which we shall suppose was ready for them.

The ship sails, on her return, in the month of November of the second year, with the monsoon south-west, which in a very few weeks would have carried her into the Arabian Gulf. But off Mocha, near Melinda and Tarshish, she met the north-east monsoon, and was obliged to go into that port and stay there till the end of that monsoon; after which a south-wester came to her relief in May of the third year. With the May monsoon she ran to Mocha within the Straits, and was there confined by the summer monsoon blowing up the Arabian Gulf from Suez, and meeting her. Here she lay till that monsoon, which in summer blows north-erly from Suez, changed to a south-east one in October or November, and that very easily brought her up into the Eranitic Gulf, the middle or end of December of the third year. She had no need of more time to complete her voyage, and it was not possible she could do it in less. In short, she changed the monsoon six times, which is thirty-six months, or three years exactly; and there is not another combination of monsoons over the globe, as far as I know, capable to effect the same. The reader will please to consult the map, and keep it before him, which will remove any difficulties he may have. It is for his instruction this map has been
made,

made, not for that of the learned prelate * to whom it is inscribed, much more capable of giving additional lights, than in need of receiving any information I can give, even on this subject.

The celebrated Montefquieu conjectures, that Ophir was really on the coast of Africa; and the conjecture of that great man merits more attention than the assertions of ordinary people. He is too sagacious, and too enlightened, either to doubt of the reality of the voyage itself, or to seek for Ophir and Tarshish in China. Uninformed, however, of the particular direction of the monsoons upon the coast, first very slightly spoken of by Eudoxus, and lately observed and delineated by Dr. Halley, he was staggered upon considering that the whole distance, which employed a vessel in Solomon's time for three years, was a thousand leagues, scarcely more than the work of a month. He, therefore, supposes, that the reason of delay was owing to the imperfection of the vessels, and goes into very ingenious calculations, reasonings, and conclusions thereupon. He conjectures, therefore, that the ships employed by Solomon were what he calls *junks* † of the Red Sea, made of papyrus, and covered with hides or leather.

Pliny had said, that one of these junks of the Red Sea was twenty days on a voyage, which a Greek or Roman vessel would have performed in seven; and Strabo § had said the same thing before him.

This

* Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Carlisle. † Vide L'Esprit des Loix, liv. xxi. cap. 6. p. 476. ‡ Plin lib. vi. cap. 22.

§ Strabo, lib. xv.

This relative slowness, or swiftness, will not solve the difficulty. For, if these junks * were the vessels employed to Ophir, the long voyage, much more they would have been employed on the short one, to and from India; now they performed this within a year, which was all a Roman or Greek vessel could do, therefore this was not the cause. Those employed by Solomon were Tyrian and Idumean vessels, the best ships and sailers of their age. Whoever has seen the prodigious swell, the violent currents, and strong south-westers beyond the Straits of Babelmandeb, will not need any argument to persuade him, that no vessel made of papyrus, or leather, could live an hour upon that sea. The junks, indeed, were light and convenient boats, made to cross the narrow gulf between the Sabæans and Homerites, or Cushites, at Azab upon the Red Sea, and carry provisions from Arabia Felix to the more desert coast of Azab. I have hinted, that the names of places sufficiently demonstrate the great loss of men that happened to the traders to Sofala, before the knowledge of the monsoons, and the introduction of the use of sails.

I shall now consider how far the thing is confirmed by the names of places in the language of the country, such as they have retained among them to the present day.

There are three Mochas mentioned in this voyage, situated in countries very dissimilar to, and distant from, each other. The first is in Arabia Deserta, in lat. 30° nearly, not far from the bottom of the
Gulf

* I know there are contrary opinions, and the junks might have been various. Vide Salm.

Gulf of Suez. The second is in lat. 13° , a small distance from the Straits of Babelmandeb. The third Mocha is in lat. 3° south, near Tarshish, on the coast of Melinda. Now, the meaning of Mocha, in the Ethiopic, is *prison*; and is particularly given to these three places, because, in any of them, a ship is forced to stay or be detained for months, till the changing of the monsoon sets her at liberty to pursue her voyage. At Mocha, near the bottom of the Gulf of Suez, a vessel, wanting to proceed southward to Babelmandeb, is kept here in prison all winter, till the summer monsoon sets her at liberty. At Mocha, in Arabia Felix, the same happens to any vessel wanting to proceed to Suez in the summer months; she may come up from the Straits of Babelmandeb to Mocha Road by the accidental direction of the head of the Gulf; but, in the month of May, the north-west wind obliges her to put into Mocha, and there to stay till the south-easter relieves her in November. After you double Gardesfan, the summer monsoon, at north-east, is carrying your vessel full sail to Sofala, when the anomalous monsoon takes her off the coast of Melinda, and forces her into Tarshish, where she is imprisoned for six months in the Mocha there. So that this word is very emphatically applied to those places where ships are necessarily detained by the change of monsoons, and proves the truth of what I have said.

The last Cape on the Abyssinian shore, before you run into the Straits, is Cape Defan, called by the Portuguese, *Cape Dafui*. This has no meaning in any language; the Abyssinians, on whose side it is,
call

call it *Cape Defan*, the Cape of Burial. It was probably there where the east wind drove ashore the bodies of such as had been shipwrecked in the voyage. The point of the same coast, which stretches out into the Gulf, before you arrive at Babelmandeb, was, by the Romans, called *Promontorium Aromaticum*, and since, by the Portuguese, *Cape Gardesui*. But the name given it by the Abyssinians and sailors on the Gulf is, *Cape Gardesfan*, the Straits of Burial.

Still nearer the Straits is a small port in the kingdom of Adel, called *Mete*, *i. e.* Death, or, he or they are dead. And more to the westward, in the same kingdom, is Mount Felix, corruptly so called by the Portuguese. The Latins call it *Elephas Mons*, the Mountain of the Elephant; and the natives, *Jibbel Feel*, which has the same signification. The Portuguese, who did not know that *Jibbel Feel* was *Elephas Mons*, being misled by the sound, have called it *Jibbel Felix*, the Happy Mountain, a name to which it has no sort of title.

The Straits by which we enter the Arabian Gulf are by the Portuguese called *Babelmandel*, which is nonsense. The name by which it goes among the natives is *Babelmandeb*, the Gate or Port of Affliction. And near it Ptolemy * places a town he calls, in the Greek, *Mandaeth*, which appears to me to be only a corruption of *Mandeb*. The Promontory that makes the south side of the Straits, and the city thereupon, is *Diræ*, which means the Hades, or Hell, by Ptolemy † called *Διρα*. This, too, is

VOL. II.

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a trans-

* Ptol. Geog. lib. 4. cap 7.

† Id. ibid.

a translation of the ancient name, because *Διρα* (or *Diræ*) has no signification in the Greek. A cluster of islands you meet in the canal, after passing Mocha is called *Jibbel Zekir*, or, the Islands of Prayer for the remembrance of the dead. And still, in the same course up the Gulf, others are called *Sebaat Gzier*, Praise or Glory be to God, as we may suppose, for the return from this dangerous navigation.

All the coast to the eastward, to where *Gardefan* stretches out into the ocean, is the territory of *Saba* which immemorially has been the mart of frankincense, myrrh, and balsam. Behind *Saba*, upon the Indian Ocean, is the *Regio Cinnamonifera*, where a considerable quantity of that wild cinnamon grows, which the Italian druggists call *canella*.

Inland near to *Azab*, as I have before observed, are large ruins, some of them of small stones and lime adhering strongly together. There is especially an aqueduct, which brought formerly a large quantity of water from a fountain in the mountains, which must have greatly contributed to the beauty, health, and pleasure of *Saba*. This is built with large massy blocks of marble, brought from the neighbouring mountains, placed upon one another without lime or cement, but joined with thick cramps, or bars of brass. There are likewise a number of wells, not six feet wide, composed of pieces of marble hewn to parts of a circle, and joined with the same bars of brass also. This is exceedingly surprising, for *Agatharcides* * tells us, that the *Alileans* and *Cassandrins*, in the southern parts

* *Agath.* p. 60.

parts of Arabia (just opposite to Azab) had among them gold in such plenty, that they would give double the weight of gold for iron, triple its weight for brass, and ten times its weight for silver; that, in digging the earth, they found pieces of gold as big as olive-stones, but others much larger.

This seems to me extraordinary, if brass was at such a price in Arabia, that it could be here employed in the meanest and most common uses. However this be, the inhabitants of the Continent, and of the peninsula of Arabia opposite to it, of all denominations agree, that this was the royal seat of the Queen of Saba, famous in ecclesiastical history for her journey to Jerusalem; that these works belonged to her, and were erected at the place of her residence; that all the gold, silver, and perfumes came from her kingdom of Sofala, which was Ophir, and which reached from thence to Azab, upon the borders of the Red Sea, along the coast of the Indian Ocean.

It will very possibly be thought, that this is the place in which I should mention the journey that the Queen of Saba made into Palestine; but as the dignity of the expedition itself, and the place it holds in Jewish antiquities, merits that it should be treated in a place by itself, so the connection that it is supposed to have with the foundation of the monarchy of Abyssinia, the country whose history I am going to write, makes this particularly proper for the sake of connection; and I shall, therefore continue the history of the trade of the Arabian Gulf to a period in which I can resume the narrative of this expedition without occasioning any interruption to either.

C H A P. V.

Fluctuating State of the India Trade—Hurt by Military Expeditions of the Persians—Revives under the Ptolemies—Falls to Decay under the Romans.

THE prosperous days of the commerce with the Euxine Gulf seemed to be at this time nearly past; yet after the revolt of the ten tribes, Edom remaining to the house of David, they still carried on a sort of trade from the Euxine Gulf, though attended with many difficulties. This continued till the reign of Jehosaphat *; but, on Jehoram's succeeding that prince, the Edomites † revolted and chose a king of their own, and were never after subject to the kings of Judah till the reign of Uzziah ‡, who conquered Eloth, fortified it, and having peopled it with a colony of his own, revived the old traffic. This subsisted till the reign of Ahaz, when Rezin king of Damascus took Eloth §, and expelled the Jews, planting in their stead a colony of Syrians. But he did not long enjoy this good fortune, for the year after, Rezin ¶ was conquered by Tilgath-pileser; and one of the fruits of this

* 1 Kings, chap. xxii. ver. 48. 2 Chron. chap. xx. ver. 36.

† 2 Kings, chap. viii. ver. 22. 2 Chron. chap. xxi. ver. 10.

‡ 2 Kings, chap. xiv. ver. 22. 2 Chron. chap. 26. ver. ii.

§ 2 Kings, chap. xvi. ver. 6. ¶ 2 Kings, chap. xvi. ver. 6.

this victory was the taking of Eloth, which never after returned to the Jews, or was of any profit to Jerusalem.

The repeated wars and conquest to which the cities on the Elanitic Gulf had been subject, the extirpation of the Edomites, all the great events that immediately followed one another, of course disturbed the usual channel of trade by the Red Sea, whose ports were now consequently become unsafe by being in possession of strangers, robbers, and soldiers; it changed, therefore, to a place nearer the centre of police and good government, than fortified and frontier towns could be supposed to be. The Indian and African merchants, by convention, met in Assyria, as they had done in Semiramis's time; the one by the Persian Gulf and Euphrates, the other through Arabia. Assyria, therefore, became the mart of the India trade in the East.

The conquests of Nabopollaser, and his son Nebuchadnezzar, had brought a prodigious quantity of bullion, both silver and gold, to Babylon his capital. For he had plundered Tyre*, and robbed Solomon's Temple † of all the gold that had been brought from Ophir; and he had, besides, conquered Egypt and laid it waste, and cut off the communication of trade in all these places, by almost extirpating the people. Immense riches flowed to him, therefore, on all sides, and it was a circumstance particularly favourable to
merchants

* Ezek. chap. xxvi. ver. 7. † 2 Kings, chap. xxiv. ver. 13.
and 2 Chron. chap. xxxvi. ver. 7.

merchants in that country, that it was governed by written laws that screened their properties from any remarkable violence or injustice.

I suppose the phrase in scripture, "The law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not *," must mean only written laws, by which those countries were governed, without being left to the discretion of the judge, as all the East was, and as it actually now is.

In this situation the country was at the birth of Cyrus, who, having taken Babylon † and slain Belshazzar ‡, became master of the whole trade and riches of the East. Whatever character writers give of this great Prince, his conduct, with regard to the commerce of the country, shews him to have been a weak one: For, not content with the prodigious prosperity to which his dominions had arrived, by the misfortune of other nations, and perhaps by the good faith kept by his subjects to merchants, enforced by those written laws, he undertook the most absurd and disastrous project of molesting the traders themselves, and invading India, that all at once he might render himself master of their riches. He executed this scheme just as absurdly as he formed it; for, knowing that large caravans of merchants came into Persia and Assyria from India, through the Ariana (the desert coast that runs all along the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf, almost entirely destitute of water, and very nearly

* Dan. chap. vi. ver. 8. and Esther, chap. i. ver. 19.

† Ezra, chap. v. ver. 14. and chap. vi. ver. 5.

‡ Dan. chap. v. ver. 30.

nearly as much so of provisions, both which caravans always carry with them) he attempted to enter India by the very same road with a large army, the very same way his predecessor Semiramis had projected 1300 years before; and as her army had perished, so did his to a man, without having ever had it in his power to take one pepper-corn by force from any part of India.

The same fortune attended his son and successor Cambyfes, who, observing the quantity of gold brought from Ethiopia into Egypt, resolved to march to the source, and at once to make himself master of those treasures by rapine, which he thought came too slowly through the medium of commerce.

Cambyfes's expedition into Africa is too well known for me to dwell upon it in this place. It hath obtained a celebrity by the absurdity of the project, by the enormous cruelty and havock that attended the course of it, and by the great and very just punishment that closed it in the end. It was one of those many monstrous extravagancies which made up the life of the greatest madman that ever disgraced the annals of antiquity: The basest mind is perhaps the most capable of avarice; and when this passion has taken possession of the human heart, it is strong enough to excite us to undertakings as great as any of those dictated by the noblest of our virtues.

Cambyfes, amidst the commission of the most horrid excesses during the conquest of Egypt, was informed that, from the south of that country, there was constantly brought a quantity of pure gold, independent of what came from the top of the
Arabic

Arabic Gulf, which was now carried into Assyria, and circulated in the trade of his country. This supply of gold belonged properly and exclusively to Egypt; and a very lucrative, though not very extensive commerce, was, by its means, carried on with India. He found out that the people, possessing these treasures, were called *Macrobii*, which signifies *long lives*; and that they possessed a country divided from him by lakes, mountains, and deserts. But what still affected him most was, that in his way were a multitude of warlike Shepherds, with whom the reader is already sufficiently acquainted.

Cambyfes, to flatter, and make peace with them, fell furiously upon all the gods and temples in Egypt; he murdered the sacred ox, the apis, destroyed Memphis, and all the public buildings wherever he went. This was a gratification to the Shepherds, being equally enemies to those that worshipped beasts, or lived in cities. After this introduction, he concluded peace with them in the most solemn manner, each nation vowing eternal amity with the other. Notwithstanding which, no sooner was he arrived at Thebes (in Egypt) than he detached a large army to plunder the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, the greatest object of the worship of these *shepherds*; which army utterly perished without a man remaining, covered, as I suppose, by the moving sands. He then began his march against the *Macrobii*, keeping close to the Nile. The country there being too high to receive any benefit from the inundation of the river, produced no corn, so that part of his army died for want of provision.

Another

Another detachment of his army proceeded to the country of the Shepherds, who, indeed, furnished him with food; but, exasperated at the sacrilege he had committed against their god, they conducted his troops through places where they could procure no water. After suffering all this loss, he was not yet arrived beyond 24° , the parallel of Syené. From hence he dispatched ambassadors, or spies, to discover the country before him, finding he could no longer rely upon the Shepherds. These found it full of black war-like people, of great size, and prodigious strength of body; active, and continually exercised in hunting the lion, the elephant, and other monstrous beasts which live in these forests.

The inhabitants so abounded with gold, that the most common utensils and instruments were made of that metal, whilst, at the same time, they were utter strangers to bread of any kind whatever; and, not only so, but their country was, by its nature, incapable of producing any sort of grain from which bread could be made. They subsisted upon raw flesh alone, dried in the sun, especially that of the rhinoceros, the elephant, and giraffa, which they had slain in hunting. On such food they have ever since lived, and live to this day, and on such food I myself have lived with them; yet still it appears strange, that people confined to this diet, without variety or change, should have it for their characteristic that they were long livers.

They were not at all alarmed at the arrival of Cambyfes's ambassadors. On the contrary, they treated them as an inferior species of men. Upon asking

asking them about their diet, and hearing it was upon bread, they called it *dung*, I suppose as having the appearance of that bread which I have seen the miserable Agows, their neighbours, make from seeds of bastard rye, which they collect in their fields under the burning rays of the sun. They laughed at Cambyfes's requisition of submitting to him, and did not conceal their contempt of his idea of bringing an army thither.

They treated ironically his hopes of conquest, even supposing all difficulties of the desert overcome, and his army ready to enter their country, and counselled him to return while he was well, at least for a time, till he should produce a man of his army that could bend the bow that they then sent him; in which case, he might continue to advance, and have hope of conquest. The reason of their reference to the bow will be seen afterwards. I mention these circumstances of the quantity of gold, the hunting of elephants, their living upon the raw flesh, and, above all, the circumstances of the bow, as things which I myself can testify to have met with among this very people. It is, indeed, highly satisfactory in travelling, to be able to explain truths which, from a want of knowledge of the country alone, have been treated as falsehoods, and placed to the discredit of historians.

The Persians were all famous archers. The mortification, therefore, they experienced, by receiving the bow they could not bend, was a very sensible one, though the narrative of the quantity of gold the messengers had seen made a much greater impression upon Cambyfes. To procure this treasure
was,

was, however, impracticable, as he had no provision, nor was there any in the way of his march. His army, therefore, wasted daily by death and dispersion; and he had the mortification to be obliged to retreat into Egypt, after part of his troops had been reduced to the necessity of eating each other*.

Darius, king of Persia, attempted to open this trade in a much more worthy and liberal manner, as he sent ships down the river Indus into the ocean, whence they entered the Red Sea. It is probable, in this voyage, he acquired all the knowledge necessary for establishing this trade in Persia; for he must have passed through the Persian Gulf, and along the whole eastern coast of Arabia; he must have seen the marts of perfumes and spices that were at the mouth of the Red Sea, and the manner of bartering for gold and silver, as he was necessarily in those trading places which were upon the very same coast from which the bullion was brought. I do not know, then, why M. de Montesquieu † has treated this expedition of Darius so contemptuously, as it appears to have been executed without great trouble or expence, and terminated without loss or hardship; the strongest proof that it was at first wisely planned. The prince himself was famous for his love of learning, which we find by his anxiety to be admitted among the Magi, and the sense he had of that honour, in causing it to be engraved upon his tomb.

The expedition of Alexander into India was, of all events, that which most threatened the destruction

* Lucan, lib. x. ver. 280. † Vide Montesqu. liv. 21. chap. 8.

tion of the commerce of the Continent, or the dispersing it into different channels throughout the East: First, by the destruction of Tyre, which must have, for a time, annihilated the trade by the Arabian Gulf; then by his march through Egypt into the country of the Shepherds, and his intended further progress into Ethiopia to the head of the Nile, If we may judge of what we hear of him in that part of his expedition, we should be apt not to believe, as others are fond of doing, that he had schemes of commerce mingled with those of conquests. His anxiety about his own birth at the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, this first question that he asked of the priest, "Where the Nile had its source," seemed to denote a mind busied about other objects; for else he was then in the very place for information, being in the temple of that horned god *, the deity of the Shepherds, the African carriers of the Indian produce; a temple which, though in the midst of sand, and destitute of gold or silver, possessed more and better information concerning the trade of India and Africa, than could be found in any other place on the Continent. Yet we do not hear of one question being made, or one arrangement taken, relative to opening the India trade with Thebes, or with Alexandria, which he built afterwards.

After having viewed the main ocean to the south, he ordered Nearchus with his fleet to coast along the Persian Gulf, accompanied by part of the army on land for their mutual assistance, as there were a
great

* Lucan, lib. 9 ver. 515.

great many hardships which followed the march of the army by land, and much difficulty and danger attended the shipping as they were sailing in unknown seas against the monsoons. Nearchus himself informed the king at Babylon of his successful voyage, who gave him orders to continue it into the Red Sea, which he happily accomplished to the bottom of the Arabian Gulf.

We are told it was his intention to carry on the India trade by the Gulf of Persia, for which reason he broke down all the cataracts and dams which the Persians had built over the rivers communicating with the Euphrates. No use, however, seems to have been made of his knowledge of Arabia and Ethiopia, which makes me imagine this expedition of Alexander's fleet was not an idea of his own. It is, indeed, said, that when Alexander came into India, the southern or Indian Ocean was perfectly unknown; but I am rather inclined to believe from this circumstance, that this voyage was made from some memorials remaining concerning the voyage of Darius. The fact and circumstances of Darius's voyage are come down to us, and, by these very same means, it must be probable they reached Alexander, who I do not believe ever intended to carry on the India trade at Babylon.

To render it impossible, indeed, he could not have done three things more effectual than he did, when he destroyed Tyre, and dispersed its inhabitants, persecuted the Orites, or land-carriers, in the Ariana, and built Alexandria upon the Mediterranean; which last step fixed the Indian trade in
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that city, and would have kept it there eternally, had the Cape of Good Hope never been discovered.

The Ptolemies, the wisest princes that ever sat upon the throne of Egypt, applied with the utmost care and attention to cultivate the trade of India, to keep up perfect and friendly understanding with every country that supplied any branch of it, and, instead of disturbing it either in Asia, Arabia, or Ethiopia, as their predecessors had done, they used their utmost efforts to encourage it in all quarters.

Ptolemy I. was then reigning in Alexandria, the foundation of whose greatness he not only laid, but lived to see it arrive at the greatest perfection. It was his constant saying, that the true glory of a king was not in being rich himself, but making his subjects so. He, therefore, opened his ports to all trading nations, encouraged strangers of every language, protected caravans, and a free navigation by sea, by which, in a few years, he made Alexandria the great store-house of merchandize, from India, Arabia, and Ethiopia. He did still further to insure the duration of his kingdom, at the same time that he shewed the utmost disinterestedness for the future happiness of his people. He educated his son, Ptolemy Philadelphus, with the utmost care, and the happy genius of that prince had answered his father's utmost expectations; and, when he arrived at the age of governing, the father, worn out by the fatigue of long wars, surrendered the kingdom to his son.

Ptolemy had been a soldier from his infancy, and consequently kept up a proper military force, that made him every where respected in these warlike
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and unfettled times. He had a fleet of two hundred ships of war constantly ready in the port of Alexandria, the only part for which he had apprehensions. All behind him was wisely governed, whilst it enjoyed a most flourishing trade, to the prosperity of which peace is necessary. He died in peace and old age, after having merited the glorious name of *Soter*, or *Saviour of the kingdom*, which he himself had founded, the greatest part of which differed from him in language, colour, habit, and religion.

It is with astonishment we see how thoroughly he had established the trade of India, Ethiopia, and Arabia, and what progress he had already made towards uniting it with that of Europe, by a passage in Athenæus*, who mentions a festival and entertainment given by his son, Ptolemy Philadelphus, to the people of Alexandria at his accession, while his father was alive, but had just given up his crown.

There was in this procession a great number of Indian women, besides of other countries; and by Indians we may understand, not only the Asiatic Indians, but the Abyssinians, and the inhabitants of the higher part of Africa, as all these countries were comprehended under the common appellation of *India*. These were in the habit of slaves, and each led, or was followed by, a camel loaded with incense of Sheher, and cinnamon, besides other aromatics. After these came a number of Ethiopian blacks carrying the teeth of 600 elephants.

Another

* Athen. lib. 5.

Another troop had a prodigious quantity of ebony ; and again others loaded with that finest gold, which is not dug from the mine, but washed from the mountains by the tropical rains in small pieces, or pellets, which the natives and traders at this day call *Tibbar*. Next came a pack of 24,000 Indian dogs, all Asiatics, from the peninsula of India, followed by a prodigious number of foreign animals, both beasts and birds, paroquets, and other birds of Ethiopia, carried in cages ; 130 Ethiopian sheep, 300 Arabian, and 20 from the Isle of Nubia* ; 26 Indian buffaloes, white as snow, and eight from Ethiopia ; three brown bears, and a white one, which last must have been from the north of Europe ; 14 leopards, 16 panthers, four lynxes, one giraffa, and a rhinoceros of Ethiopia.

When we reflect upon this prodigious mixture of animals, all so easily procured at one time, without preparation, we may imagine, that the quantity of merchandises, for common demand, which accompanied them, must have been in the proper proportion.

The current of trade ran towards Alexandria with the greatest impetuosity, all the articles of luxury of the East were to be found there. Gold and silver, which were sent formerly to Tyre, came now down to the Isthmus (for Tyre was no more) by a much shorter carriage, thence to Memphis, whence it was sent down the Nile to Alexandria. The gold from the west and south parts of the Continent

* This is probably from Atbara, or the old name of the island of Meroë, which had received the last name only as late as Cambyfes.

ment reached the same port with much less time and risk; as there was now no Red Sea to pass; and here was found the merchandise of Arabia and India in the greatest profusion.

To facilitate the communication with Arabia, Ptolemy built a town on the coast of the Red Sea, in the country of the Shepherds, and called it *Berenice**, after his mother. This was intended as a place of necessary refreshment for all the traders up and down the Gulf, whether of India or Ethiopia; hence the cargoes of merchants, who were afraid of losing the monsoons, or had lost them, were carried by the inhabitants of the country, in three days, to the Nile, and there embarked for Alexandria. To make the communication between the Nile and the Red Sea still more commodious, this prince tried an attempt (which had twice before miscarried with very great loss) to bring a canal † from the Red Sea to the Nile, which he actually accomplished, joining it to the Pelusiac, or Eastern branch of the Nile. Locks and sluices moreover are mentioned as having been employed even in those early days by Ptolemy, but very trifling ones could be needed, for the difference of level is there but very small.

This noble canal, one hundred yards broad, was not of that use to trade which was expected; merchants were weary of the length of time consumed in going to the very bottom of the Gulf, and afterwards with this inland navigation of the canal, and that of the Nile, to Alexandria. It was therefore much more expeditious to unload at Berenice, and,

VOL. II.

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* Plin. lib. 6. cap. 20.

† Strabo, lib. 17. p. 932.

after three days journey, send their merchandise directly down to Alexandria. Thus the canal was difused, the goods passed from Berenice to the Nile by land, and that road continues open for the same purpose to this day.

It should appear, that Ptolemy had employed the vessels of India and the Red Sea, to carry on his commerce with the peninsula, and that the manner of trading directly to India with his own ships, was either not known or forgotten. He therefore sent two ambassadors, or messengers, Megasthenes and Denis, to observe and report what was the state of India since the death of Alexander. These two performed their voyage safely and speedily. The account they gave of India, if it was strictly a true one, was, in all respects, perfectly calculated to animate people to the further prosecution of that trade. In the mean time, in order to procure more convenience for vessels trading on the Red Sea, he resolved to attempt the penetrating into that part of Ethiopia which lies on that sea, and, as historians imagine with an intention to plunder the inhabitants of their riches.

It must not, however, be supposed, that Ptolemy was not enough acquainted with the productions of a country so near to Egypt, as to know this part of it had neither gold nor silver, whilst it was full of forests likewise; for it was that part of Ethiopia called Barbaria, at this day Barabra, inhabited by shepherds wandering with their cattle about the neighbouring mountains according as the rains fall. Another more probable conjecture was, that he wanted, by bringing about a change of manners in
these

these people, to make them useful to him in a matter that was of the highest importance.

Ptolemy, like his father, had a very powerful fleet and army, but he was inferior to many of the princes, his rivals, in elephants, of which great use was then made in war. These Ethiopians were hunters, and killed them for their subsistence. Ptolemy, however, wished to have them taken alive, being numerous, and hoped both to furnish himself, and dispose of them as an article of trade, to his neighbours.

There is something indeed ridiculous in the manner in which he executed this expedition. Aware of the difficulty of subsisting in that country, he chose only a hundred Greek horsemen, whom he covered with coats of monstrous appearance and size, which left nothing visible but the eyes of the rider. Their horses too were disguised by huge trappings, which took from them all proportion and shape. In this manner they entered this part of Ethiopia, spreading terror every where by their appearance, to which their strength and courage bore a strict proportion whenever they came to action. But neither force nor intreaty could gain any thing upon these Shepherds, or ever make them change or forsake the food they had been so long accustomed to; and all the fruit Ptolemy reaped from this expedition, was to build a city, by the sea-side, in the south-east corner of this country, which he called Ptolemais Theron, or Ptolemais in the country of wild beasts.

I have already observed, but shall again repeat it, that the reason why ships, in going up and down

the Red Sea, kept always upon the Ethiopian shore, and why the greatest number of cities were always built upon that side is, that water is much more abundant on the Ethiopian side than the Arabian, and it was therefore of the greatest consequence to trade to have that coast fully discovered and civilized. Indeed it is more than probable, that nothing further was intended by the expedition of the hundred Greeks just now mentioned, than to gain sufficient intelligence how this might be done most perfectly.

Ptolemy Evergetes, son and successor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, availed himself of this discovery. Having provided himself amply with necessaries for his army, and ordered a fleet to coast along beside him, up the Red Sea, he penetrated quite through the country of the Shepherds into that of the Ethiopian Troglodytes, who are black and woolly-headed, and inhabit the low country quite to the mountains of Abyssinia. Nay *, he even ascended those mountains, forced the inhabitants to submission, built a large temple at Axum, the capital of Siré, and raised a great many obelisks, several of which are standing to this day. Afterwards proceeding to the south-east, he descended into the cinnamon and myrrh country, behind Cape Gardafan (the Cape that terminates the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean), from this, crossed over to Arabia, to the Homerites, being the same people with the Abyssinians, only on the Arabian shore. He then conquered several of the Arabian princes, who first

* Mon. Aduli.]

first resisted him, and had it in his power to have put an end to the trade of India there, had he not been as great a politician as he was a warrior. He used his victory, therefore, in no other manner, than to exhort and oblige these princes to protect trade, encourage strangers, and, by every means, provide for the surety of neutral intercourse, by making rigorous examples of robbers by sea and land.

The reigns of the latter Ptolemies were calculated to bring this commerce to a decline, had it not been for two great events, the fall of Carthage, destroyed by Scipio, and that of Corinth, by the consul Mummius. The importance of these events to Alexandria seems to have sustained the prosperity of Egypt, even against the ravages committed in the war between Ptolemy the VI. and VII. Alexandria was then besieged, and not only deprived of its riches, but reduced to the utmost want of necessaries, and the horrid behaviour of Ptolemy VII. (had it continued) would have soon rendered that city desolate. The consequence of such a conduct, however, made a strong impression on the prince himself, who, at once recalling his unjust edicts, by which he had banished all foreign merchants from Alexandria, became on a sudden wholly addicted to commerce, the encourager of arts and sciences, and the protector of strangers.

The impolitic conduct in the beginning of his reign, however, had affected trade even in India. For the story preserved by Posidonius, and very improperly criticised by Strabo seems to import little less. One day, the troops posted on the
Arabian

Arabian Gulf found a ship abandoned to the waves, on board of which was one Indian only, half dead with hunger and thirst, whom they brought to the king. This Indian declared he sailed from his own country, and, having lost his course and spent all his provisions, he was carried to the place where he was found, without knowing where he was, and after having survived the rest of his companions: he concluded an imperfect narrative, by offering to be a guide to any person his majesty would send to India. His proposals were accordingly accepted, and Eudoxus was named by the king to accompany him. Strabo* indeed laughs at this story. However, we must say, he has not seized the most ridiculous parts of it.

We are told that the king ordered the Indian to be taught Greek, and waited with patience till he had learned that language. Surely, before any person could thus instruct him, the master must have had some language in common with his scholar, or he had better have taught Eudoxus the Indian language, as it would have been as easy, and of much more use in the voyage he was to undertake. Besides, is it possible to believe after the many years the Egyptians traded backwards and forwards to India, that there was not a man in Alexandria who could interpret for him to the king, when such a number of Egyptians went every year to India to trade, and stayed there for months each time? Could Ptolemy Philadelphus, at his father's festival, find 600 Indian female slaves, all at once, in Alexandria;

* Strabo, lib. ii. p. 98.

dria; and, after the trade had lasted so much longer, were the people from India decreased, or would their language be less understood? The king's wisdom, moreover, did not shew itself greatly, when he was going to trust a ship with his subjects to so skilful a pilot as this Indian, who, in the first voyage, had lost himself and all his companions.

India, however, and the Indian seas, were as well known in Egypt as they are now; and the magnificence and shew which attended Eudoxus's embassy seems to prove, that whatever truth there is in the Indian being found, Eudoxus' errand must have been to remove the bad effects that the king's extortions and robberies, committed upon all strangers in the beginning of his reign, had made upon the trading nations. Eudoxus returned, but after the death of Ptolemy. The necessity, however, of this voyage appeared still great enough to make Cleopatra his widow project a second to the same place, and greater preparations were made than for the former one.

But Eudoxus, trying experiments probably about the courses of the trade-winds, lost his passage, and was thrown upon the coast of Ethiopia; where having landed, and made himself agreeable to the natives, he brought home to Egypt a particular description of that country and its produce, which furnished all the discovery necessary to instruct the Ptolemies in every thing that related to the ancient trade of Arabia. In the course of the voyage, Euxodus discovered the part of the prow of a vessel which had been broken off by a storm. The figure of a horse made it an object of inquiry; and

and some of the failors on board, who had been employed in European voyages, immediately knew this wreck to be part of one of those vessels used to trade on the western ocean. Eudoxus * instantly perceived all the importance of the discovery, which amounted to nothing less, than that there was a passage round Africa from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean. Full of this thought, he returned to Egypt, and, having shewn the prow of his vessel to European ship-masters, they all declared that this had been part of a vessel which had belonged to Cadiz, in Spain.

This discovery, great as it was, was to none of more importance than to Eudoxus ; for, some time after, falling under the displeasure of Ptolemy Lathyrus, VIIIth of that name, and being in danger of his life, he fled and embarked on the Red Sea, sailed round the peninsula of Africa, crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and came safely to Cadiz.

The spirit of inquiry, and desire of travelling, spread itself instantly through Egypt, upon this voyage of Eudoxus ; and different travellers pushed their discoveries into the heart of the country, where some of the nations are reported to have been so ignorant as not to know the use of fire : ignorance almost incredible, had we not an instance of it in our own times. It was in the reign of Ptolemy IX. that Agatharcides † drew up his description of the Red Sea.

The reigns of the other Ptolemies ending in the XIIIth of that name, though full of great events, have

* Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 2. cap. 67. † Dodwell's Dissertat. vol. 1. Scrip. Grac. Min. ed. Ox. 1698. 8vo.

have nothing material to our present subject. Their constant expence and profusion must have occasioned a great consumption of trading articles, and very little else was wanting; or, if there had, it must have arrived at its height in the reign of the celebrated Cleopatra; whose magnificence, beauty, and great talents, made her a wonder, greater than any in her capital. In her time, all nations flocked, as well for curiosity as trade, to Alexandria; Arabs, Ethiopians, Troglodytes, Jews, and Medes; and all were received and protected by this princess, who spoke to each of them in his own language*.

The discovery of Spain, and the possession of the mines of Attica from which they drew their silver, and the revolution that happened in Egypt itself, seemed to have superseded the communication with the coast of Africa; for, in Strabo's time, few of the ports of the Indian Ocean, even those nearest the Red Sea, were known. I should, indeed, suppose, that the trade to India by Egypt decreased from the very time of the conquest by Cæsar. The mines the Romans had at the source of the river Betis†, in Spain, did not produce them above 15,000*l.* a-year; this was not a sufficient capital for carrying on the trade to India, and therefore the immense riches of the Romans seem to have been derived from the greatness of the prices, not from the extent of the trade. In fact‡, we are told that 100 *per cent.* was a profit in common trade upon the Indian commodities. Egypt now, and all its neigh-

* Plut. Vita. Ant. p. 913. tom. 1. part 2. Lubec. 1624. fol.

† Strabo, lib. 3. ‡ Plin. lib. vi. cap. 23.

neighbourhood, began to wear a face of war, to which it had been a stranger for so many ages. The north of Africa was in constant troubles, after the first ruin of Carthage; so that we may imagine the trade to India began again, on that side, to be carried on pretty much in the same manner it had been before the days of Alexander. But it had enlarged itself very much on the Persian side, and found an easy, short inlet, into the north of Europe, which then furnished them a market and consumption of spices.

I must confess, notwithstanding, if it is true what Strabo says he heard himself in Egypt, that the Romans employed one hundred and twenty vessels in the India trade*, it must at that time have lost very little of its vigour. We must, however, imagine, that great part of this was for the account, and with the funds of foreign merchants. The Jews in Alexandria, until the reign of Ptolemy Phiscon, had carried on a very extensive part of the India trade. All Syria was mercantile; and lead, iron, and copper, supplied, in some manner, the deficiency of gold and silver, which never again was in such abundance till after the discovery of America.

But the ancient trade to India, by the Arabian Gulf and Africa, carried on by the medium of these two metals, remained at home undiminished with the Ethiopians, defended by large extensive deserts, and happy with the enjoyment of riches and security,

* Strabo, lib. 2. p. 81.

city, till a fresh discovery again introduced to them both partners and masters in their trade.

One of the reasons that makes me imagine the India trade was not flourishing, or in great esteem; immediately upon the Roman conquest of Egypt, is, that Augustus, very soon after, attempted to conquer Arabia. He sent Elius Gallus, with an army from Egypt into Arabia, who found there a number of effeminate, timid people, scarcely to be driven to self-defence by violence, and ignorant of every thing that related to war. Elius, however, found that they overmatched him in cunning, and the perfect knowledge of the country, which their constant employment as carriers had taught them. His guides led him round from hardship to hardship till his army almost perished with hunger and thirst, without seeing any of those riches his master had sent him to take possession of.

Thus was the Arabian expedition of Augustus conceived with the same views as those of Semiramis, Cyrus, and Cambyfes, deservedly as unhappy in its issue as these first had been.

That the African trade, moreover, was lost, appears from Strabo *, and his reasoning upon the voyage of Eudoxus, which he treats as a fable. But his reasoning proves just the contrary, and this voyage was one foundation for opening this trade again, and making this coast more perfectly known. This likewise appears clear from Ptolemy †, who, speaking of a promontory or cape opposite to Madagascar,

* Strabo, lib. ii. p. 98. † Ptol. lib. iv. cap. 9. p. 115.

dagascar, on the coast of Africa, says it was inhabited by antropophagi, or man-eaters, and that all beyond 8° south was unknown, and that this cape extended to and joined the continent of India. †

† Ptol. lib. vii. cap. 3.

CHAP

C H A P. VI.

Queen of Saba visits Jerusalem—Abyssinian Tradition concerning Her—Supposed Founder of that Monarchy—Abyssinia embraces the Jewish Religion—Jewish Hierarchy still retained by the Falasha—Some conjectures concerning their Copy of the Old Testament.

IT is now that I am to fulfil my promise to the reader, of giving him some account of the visit made by the Queen of Sheba*, as we erroneously call her, and the consequences of that visit; the foundation of an Ethiopian monarchy, and the continuation of the sceptre in the tribe of Judah, down to this day. If I am obliged to go back in point of time, it is, that I may preserve both the account of the trade of the Arabian Gulf, and of this Jewish kingdom, distinct and unbroken.

We are not to wonder, if the prodigious hurry and flow of business, and the immensely valuable transactions they had with each other, had greatly familiarised the Tyrians and Jews, with their correspondents the Cushites and Shepherds on the coast of Africa. This had gone so far, as very naturally to have created a desire in the queen of Azab, the sovereign of that country, to go herself and see the application

* It should properly be Saba, Azab, or Azaba, all signifying *South*.

cation of such immense treasures that had been exported from her country for a series of years; and the prince who so magnificently employed them. There can be no doubt of this expedition, as Pagan, Arab, Moor, Abyssinian, and all the countries round, vouch it pretty much in the terms of scripture.

Many* have thought this queen was an Arab. But Saba was a separate state, and the Sabeans a distinct people from the Ethiopians and the Arabs, and have continued so till very lately. We know, from history, that it was a custom among these Sabeans, to have women for their sovereigns in preference to men, a custom which still subsists among their descendents.

————— *Medis levibusque Sabæis,*
Imperat hos sexus Reginarumque subarmis,
Barbariæ †, pars magna jacet. CLAUDIAN.

Her name, the Arabs say, was *Belkis*; the Abyssinians, *Maqueda*. Our Saviour calls her *Queen of the South*, without mentioning any other name, but gives his sanction to the truth of the voyage. “The Queen of the South (or Saba, or Azab) shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here †.” No other particulars, however, are mentioned about her in scripture; and it

* Such as Justin, Epiphanius, Cyril.

† By this is meant the country between the tropic and mountains of Abyssinia, the country of Shepherds, from *Berber Shepherd*. † Matth. chap. xii. ver. 42. Luke xi. 31.

it is not probable our Saviour would say she came from the uttermost parts of the earth, if she had been an Arab and had near 50° of the Continent behind her. The gold, the myrrh, cassia, and frankincense, were all the produce of her own country; and the many reasons Pineda * gives to shew she was an Arab, more than convince me that she was an Ethiopian or Cushite shepherd.

A strong objection to her being an Arab, is, that the Sabean Arabs, or Homerites, the people that lived opposite to Azab on the Arabian shore, had kings instead of queens, which latter the Shepherds had, and still have. Moreover, the kings of the Homerites were never seen abroad, and were stoned to death if they appeared in public; subjects of this stamp would not very readily suffer their queen to go to Jerusalem, even supposing they had a queen, which they had not.

Whether she was a Jewess or a Pagan is uncertain; Sabaism was the religion of all the East. It was the constant attendant and stumbling-block of the Jews; but considering the multitude of that people then trading from Jerusalem, and the long time it continued, it is not improbable she was a Jewess. “And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions †.” Our Saviour, moreover, speaks of her with praise, pointing her out as an example
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* Pin. de reb. Solomon, lib. iv. 14.—Josephus thinks she was an Ethiopian, so do Origen; Augustin, and St. Anselmo.

† 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 1. and 2 Chron. chap. ix. ver. 1.

to the Jews*. And, in her thanksgiving before Solomon, she alludes to *God's blessing* on the *seed* of Israel for ever †, which is by no means the language of a Pagan, but of a person skilled in the ancient history of the Jews.

She likewise appears to have been a person of learning, and that sort of learning which was then almost peculiar to Palestine, not to Ethiopia. For we see that one of the reasons of her coming, was to examine whether Solomon was really the learned man he was said to be. She came to try him in allegories, or parables, in which Nathan had instructed Solomon.

The learning of the East, and of the neighbouring kings that corresponded with each other, especially in Palestine and Syria, consisted chiefly in these: “ And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.”—“ Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites, and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home, why shouldest thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee ‡?”

The annals of Abyssinia, being very full upon this point, have taken a middle opinion, and by
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* Matt. chap. xii. ver. 42. and Luke, chap. xi. ver. 31.

† 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 9. and 2 Chron. chap. ix. ver. 8.

‡ 2 Chron. chap. xxv. ver. 18. 19.

no means an improbable one. They say she was a Pagan when she left Azab, but being full of admiration at the sight of Solomon's works, she was converted to Judaism in Jerusalem, and bore him a son, whom she called Menilek, and who was their first king. However strongly they assert this, and however dangerous it would be to doubt it in Abyssinia, I will not here aver it for truth, nor much less still will I positively contradict it, as scripture has said nothing about it. I suppose, whether true or not, in the circumstances she was, whilst Solomon also, so far from being very nice in his choice, was particularly addicted to Idumeans*, and other strange women, he could not more naturally engage himself in any amour than in one with the queen of Saba, with whom he had so long entertained the most lucrative connections, and most perfect friendship, and who, on her part, by so long a journey, had surely made sufficient advances.

The Abyssinians, both Jews and Christians, believe the xlvth psalm to be a prophecy of this queen's voyage to Jerusalem; that she was attended by a daughter of Hiram's from Tyre to Jerusalem, and that the last part contains a declaration of her having a son by Solomon, who was to be king over a nation of Gentiles.

To Saba, or Azab, then, she returned with her son Menilek, whom, after keeping him some years, she sent back to his father to be instructed. Solomon did not neglect his charge, and he was anointed and crowned king of Ethiopia, in the temple

* 1 Kings, chap. xi. ver. 1.

of Jerufalem, and at his inauguration took the name of David. After this he returned to Azab, and brought with him a colony of Jews, among whom were many doctōrs of the law of Mofes, particularly one of each tribe, to make judges in his kingdom, from whom the prefent Umbares (or Supreme Juges, three of whom always attend the king) are faid and believed to be defcended. With thefe came alfo Azarias, the fon of Zadok the prieft, and brought with him a Hebrew tranfcript of the law, which was delivered into his cuftody, as he bore the title of Nebrit, or High Prieft; and this charge, though the book itfelf was burnt with the church of Axum in the Moorifh war of Adel, is ftill continued, as it is faid, in the lineage of Azarias, who are Nebrits, or keepers of the church of Axum, at this day. All Abyffinia was thereupon converted, and the government of the church and ftate modelled according to what was then in ufe at Jerufalem.

By the laft aét of the queen of Saba's reign, ſhe fettled the mode of fucceffion in her country for the future. Firft, ſhe enacted, that the crown ſhould be hereditary in the family of Solomon for ever. Secondly, that, after her, no woman ſhould be capable of wearing that crown or being queen, but that it ſhould defcend to the heir male, however diſtant, in excluſion of all heirs female whatever, however near; and that theſe two articles ſhould be conſidered as the fundamental laws of the kingdom, never to be altered or aboliſhed. And, laſtly, That the heirs male of the royal houſe, ſhould always be ſent priſoners to a high mountain, where they

they were to continue till their death, or till the succession should be open to them.

What was the reason of this last regulation is not known, it being peculiar to Abyssinia, but the custom of having women for sovereigns, which was a very old one, prevailed among the neighbouring shepherds in the last century, as we shall see in the course of this history, and, for what we know, prevails to this day. It obtained in Nubia till Augustus's time, when Petreius, his lieutenant in Egypt, subdued her country, and took the queen Candace prisoner. It endured also after Tiberius, as we learn from St. Philip's baptizing the eunuch* servant of queen Candace, who must have been successor to the former; for she, when taken prisoner by Petreius, is represented as an infirm woman, having but one eye †. Candace indeed was the name of all the sovereigns, in the same manner Cæsar was of the Roman emperors. As for the last severe part, the punishment of the princes, it was probably intended to prevent some disorders among the princes of her house, that she had observed frequently to happen in the house of David ‡ at Jerusalem.

The queen of Saba having made these laws irrevocable to all her posterity, died, after a long reign of forty years, in 986 before Christ, placing

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* Acts, chap. viii. ver. 27 and 28. † This shews the falshood of the remarks Strabo makes, that it was a custom in Meroë, if their sovereign, was any way mutilated, for the subjects to imitate the imperfection. In this case, Candace's subjects would have all lost an eye. Strabo, lib. 17. p. 777. 778. ‡ 2 Sam. chap. xvi. ver. 22. 1 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 13.

her son Menilek upon the throne, whose posterity, the Annals of Abyffinia would teach us to believe have ever fince reigned. So far we muft indeed bear-witnefs to them, that this is new doctrine, but has been ftedfaftly and uniformly maintained from their earlieft account of time; firft, (when Jews, then in later days after they had embraced chriftianity. We may further add, that the testimony of all the neighbouring nations is with them upon this fubject, whether they be friends or enemies. They only differ in name of the queen, or in giving her two names.

This difference, at fuch a diftance of time, fhould not break fcores, efpecially as we fhall fee that the queens in the prefent day have fometimes three or four names, and all the kings three, whence has arifen a very great confufion in their hiftory. And as for her being an Arab, the objection is ftill eafier got over. For all the inhabitants of Arabia Felix, efpecially thofe of the coaft oppofite to Saba, were reputed Abyffins, and their country part of Abyffinia, from the earlieft ages, to the Mahometan conqueft and after. They were her fubjects; firft, Sabean Pagans like herfelf, then converted (as the tradition fays) to Judaifm, during the time of the building of the temple, and continuing Jews from that time to the year 622 after Chrif, when they became Mahometans.

I fhall therefore now give a lift of their kings of the race of Solomon, defcended from the queen of Saba, whofe device is a lion paffant, proper upon a field gules, and their motto, “ *Mo Anbafa am Nizilei Solomon am Negade Jude;*” which fignifies,
‘ the

‘ the lion of the race of Solomon and tribe of Judah hath overcome.’ The Portuguese missionaries, in place of a lion passant, which is really the king’s bearing, have given him, in some of their publications a lion rampant, purposely, as is supposed, to put a cross into the paw of this Jewish lion ; but he is now returned to the lion passant, that he was in the time of Solomon, without any symbol either of religion or peace in his paws.

LIST

LIST OF THE KINGS OF ABYSSINIA,

FROM

MAQUEDA, QUEEN OF SABA, TO
THE NATIVITY.

	Years.		Years
Menilek, or David I.		Katzina reigned,	9
reigned - - -	4	Wazeha, - - -	1
Hendedya, or Zagdur,	1	Hazer, - - -	2
Awida, - - -	11	Kalas, - - -	6
Aufyi, - - -	3	Solaya, - - -	16
Sawé, - - -	31	Falaya, - - -	26
Gefaya, - - -	15	Aglebu, - - -	3
Katar, - - -	15	Afifena, - - -	1
Mouta, - - -	20	Brus, - - -	29
Bahas, - - -	9	Mohefa, - - -	1
Kawida, - - -	2	Bazen, - - -	16
Kanaza, - - -	10		

Menilek succeeded to the throne in the 986th year before Christ; and this number of years must be exhausted in the reign of these twenty-two kings, when each reign, in that case, will amount to more than forty-four years, which is impossible. The reign of the twenty-one kings of Israel, at a medium, is a little more than twenty-two years at an average, and that is thought abundantly high. And, even upon that footing of comparison, there will be wanting a great deal more than half the number of years between Menilek and Bazen, so that this account is apparently false. But I have another very material objection to it, as well as the preceding

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ing one, which is, that there is not one name in the whole list that has an Ethiopic root or derivation.

The reader will give what credit he pleases to this very ancient list. For my part, I content myself with disproving nothing but what is impossible, or contrary to the authority of scripture, or my own private knowledge. There are other lists still, which I have seen, all of no better authority than this. I shall only observe, upon this last, that there is a king in it, about nine years before our Saviour's nativity, that did me the honour of using my name two thousand years before it came into Britain, spelled in the same manner that name anciently was, before folly, and the love of novelty, wantonly corrupted it.

The Greeks, to divert the king, had told him this circumstance, and he was exceedingly entertained at it. Sometimes, when he had seen either Michael, or Fafil *, or any of the great ones do me any favour, or speak handsomely of me, he would say gravely, that he was to summon the council to inquire into my pedigree, whether I was descended of the heirs-male of that Brus who was king nine years before the nativity; that I was likely to be a dangerous person, and it was time I should be sent to Wechné, unless I chose to lose my leg or arm, if I was found, by the judges, related to him by the heirs-male. To which I answered, that however he made a jest of this, one of my predecessors was certainly a king, though not of Abyfinia,

* What immediately follows will be hereafter explained in the Narrative.

finia, not nine years before, but 1200 after our redemption; that the arms of my family were a lion like his; but, however creditable his majesty's apprehensions as to Abyffinia might be to me, I could venture to assure him, the only connections I had the honour ever to have had *with him*, were by the *heirs-female*.

At other times, when I was exceedingly low-spirited, and despairing of ever again seeing Britain, he, who well knew the cause, used to say to the Serach Massery, "Prepare the Sendick and Naga-
 " reet: let the judges be called, and the household
 " troops appear under arms, for Brus is to be
 " buried: he is an Ozoro of the line of Solomon,
 " and, for any thing I know, may be heir to the
 " crown. Bring likewise plenty of brandy, for
 " they all get drunk at burials in his country." These were days of sun-shine, when such jests passed; there were cloudy ones enough that followed, which much more than compensated the very transitory enjoyment of these.

Although the years laid down in the book of Axum do not precisely agree with our account, yet they are so near, that we cannot doubt that the revolt of the ten tribes, and destruction of Rehoboam's fleet which followed, occasioned the removal of Menilek's capital to Tigré*. But whatever was the cause, Menilek did remove his court
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* The temple which the queen of Saba had seen built, and so richly ornamented, was plundered the 5th year of Rehoboam, by Sefac, which is 13 years before Menilek died. So this could not but have disgusted him with the trade of his ancient habitation at Saba.

from Azab to a place near Axum, at this day called *Adega Daid*, the House of David; and, at no great distance, is another called *Azabo*, from his ancient metropolis, where there are old remains of building of stone and lime, a certain proof that Axum was then fallen, else he would have naturally gone thither immediately upon forsaking his mother's capital of Azab.

That country, round by Cape Gardesan, and south towards Sofala, along the Indian Ocean, was long governed by an officer called *Baharnagash*, the meaning of which is, King of the Sea, or Sea Coast. Another officer of the same title was governor of Yemen, or Arabia Felix, which, from the earliest times, belonged to Abyssinia, down to the Mahometan conquest. The king himself was called *Nagash*, or *Najashi*, so were the governors of several provinces, especially Gojam; and great confusion has risen and the multitude of these kings. We find, for example, sometimes three upon the throne at one time, which is exceedingly improbable in any country. We are, therefore, to suppose, that one of these only is king, and two of them are the *Najashi*, or *Nagash*, we have just described; for, as the regulation of the queen of Saba banished the heirs-male to the mountain, we cannot conceive how three brothers could be upon the throne at the same time, as this law subsists to the present day. This, although it is one, is not the only reason of the confusion, as I shall mention another in the sequel.

As we are about to take our leave of the Jewish religion and government in the line of Solomon, it
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is here the proper place that I should add what we have to say of the Falasha, of whom we have already had occasion to speak, when we gave a specimen of their language, among those of the stranger nations, whom we imagine to have come originally from Palestine. I did not spare my utmost pains in inquiring into the history of this curious people, and lived in friendship with several esteemed the most knowing and learned among them, and I am persuaded, as far as they knew, they told me the truth.

The account they give of themselves, which is supported only by tradition among them, is, that they came with Menilek from Jerusalem, so that they agree perfectly with the Abyssinians in the story of the queen of Saba, who, they say, was a Jewess, and her nation Jews before the time of Solomon; that she lived at Saba, or Azaba, the myrrh and frankincense country upon the Arabian Gulf. They say further, that she went to Jerusalem, under protection of Hiram king of Tyre, whose daughter is said in the xlth Psalm to have attended her thither; that she went not in ships, nor through Arabia, for fear of the Ishmaelites, but from Azab round by Masuah and Suakem, and was escorted by the Shepherds, her own subjects, to Jerusalem, and back again, making use of her own country vehicle, the camel, and that hers was a white one, of prodigious size and exquisite beauty.

They agree also, in every particular, with the Abyssinians, about the remaining part of the story, the birth and inauguration of Menilek, who was their first king; also the coming of Azarias, and
twelve

twelve elders from the twelve tribes, and other doctors of the law, whose posterity they deny to have ever apostatised to Christianity, as the Abyssinians pretend they did at the conversion. They say, that when the trade of the Red Sea fell into the hands of strangers, and all communication was shut up between them and Jerusalem, the cities were abandoned, and the inhabitants relinquished the coast; that they were the inhabitants of these cities, by trade mostly brick and tile-makers, potters, thatchers of houses, and such like mechanics, employed in them; and finding the low country of Dembea afforded materials for exercising these trades, they carried the article of pottery in that province to a degree of perfection scarcely to be imagined.

Being very industrious, these people multiplied exceedingly, and were very powerful at the time of the conversion to Christianity, or as they term it, the Apostacy under Abjeha and Atzbeha. At this time they declared a prince of the tribe of Judah, and of the race of Solomon and Menilek, to be their sovereign. The name of this prince was Phineas, who refused to abandon the religion of his forefathers, and from him their sovereigns are lineally descended; so they have still a prince of the house of Judah, although the Abyssinians, by way of reproach, have called this family Bet Israel, intimating that they were rebels, and revolted from the family of Solomon and tribe of Judah, and there is little doubt, but that some of the successors of Azarias adhered to their ancient faith also. Although there was no bloodshed upon difference of religion,

religion, yet, each having a distinct king with the same pretensions, many battles were fought from motives of ambition, and rivalry of sovereign power.

About the year 960, an attempt was made by this family to mount the throne of Abyssinia, as we shall see hereafter, when the princes of the house of Solomon were nearly extirpated upon the rock Damo. This, it is probable, produced more animosity and bloodshed. At last the power of the Falasha was so much weakened, that they were obliged to leave the flat country of Dembea, having no cavalry to maintain themselves there, and to take possession of the rugged, and almost inaccessible rocks, in that high ridge called the Mountains of Samen. One of these, which nature seems to have formed for a fortress, they chose for their metropolis, and it was ever after called the Jews Rock.

A great overthrow, which they received in the year 1600, brought them to the very brink of ruin. In that battle Gideon and Judith, their king and queen, were slain. They have since adopted a more peaceable and dutiful behaviour, pay taxes, and are suffered to enjoy their own government. Their king and queen's name was again Gideon and Judith, when I was in Abyssinia, and these names seem to be preferred for those of the Royal family. At that time they were supposed to amount to 100,000 effective men. Something like this, the sober and most knowing Abyssinians are obliged to allow to be truth; but the circumstances of the conversion from Judaism are probably not all before us.

The

The only copy of the Old Testament, which they have, is in Geez, the same made use of by the Abyssinian Christians, who are the only scribes, and sell these copies to the Jews; and, it is very singular that no controversy, or dispute about the text, has ever yet arisen between the professors of the two religions. They have no *keriketib*, or various readings; they never heard of *talmud*, *targum*, or *cabala*: Neither have they any *fringes* * or *ribband* upon their *garments*, nor is there, as far as I could learn, one scribe among them.

I asked them, being from Judea, whence they got that language which they spoke, whether it was one of the languages of the nations which they had learned on the coast of the Red Sea. They apprehended, but it was mere conjecture, that the language which they spoke was that of those nations they had found on the Red Sea, after their leaving Judea and settling there; and the reason they gave was certainly a pertinent one; that they came into Abyssinia, speaking Hebrew, with the advantage of having books in that language; but they had now forgot their Hebrew †, and it was therefore not probable they should retain any other language in which they had no books, and which they never had learned to express by letters.

I asked them, since they came from Jerusalem, how it happened they had not Hebrew, or Samaritan

* Numb. chap. xv. ver. 38, 39. Deut. chap. xxii. ver. 12.

† We see this happened to them in a much shorter time during the captivity, when they forgot the Hebrew, and spoke Chaldaec ever after.

tan copies of the law, at least the Pentateuch or Octateuch. They said they were in possession of both when they came from Jerufalem; but their fleet being destroyed, in the reign of Rehoboam, and communication becoming very uncertain by the Syrian wars, they were, from necessity, obliged to have the scriptures translated, or make use of the copies in the hands of the Shepherds, who, according to them, before Solomon's time, were all Jews.

I asked them where the Shepherds got their copy, because, notwithstanding the invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, who was the foreign obstacle the longest in their way, the Ishmaelite Arabs had access through Arabia to Jerufalem, and Syria, and carried on a great trade thither by land. They professed very candidly they could not give a satisfactory answer to that, as the time was very distant, and war had destroyed all the memorials of these transactions. I asked if they really ever had any memorials of their own country, or history of any other. They answered, with some hesitation, they had no reason to say they ever had any; if they had, they were all destroyed in the war with Gragné. This is all that I could ever learn from this people, and it required great patience and prudence in making the interrogations, and separating truth from falsehood; for many of them, (as is invariably the case with barbarians) if they once divine the reason of your inquiry, will say whatever they think will please you.

They deny the sceptre has ever departed from Judah, as they have a prince of that house reigning, and understand the prophecy of the gathering

thering of the Gentiles at the coming of Shiloh, is to be fulfilled on the appearance of the Messiah, who is not yet come, when all the inhabitants of the world are to be Jews. But I must confess they did not give an explanation of this either clearly or readily, or seem to have ever considered it before. They were not at all heated by the subject, nor interested, as far as I could discern, in the difference between us, nor fond of talking upon their religion at all, though very ready at all quotations, when a person was present who spoke Amharic, with the barbarous accent that they do; and this makes me conceive that their ancestors were not in Palestine, or present in those disputes or transactions that attended the death of our Saviour, and have subsisted ever after. They pretend that the book of Enoch was the first book of scripture they ever received. They knew nothing of that of Seth, but placed Jacob immediately after Enoch, so that they have no idea of the time in which Job lived, but said they believed it to be soon after the flood; and they look upon the book bearing his name to be the performance of that prophet.

Many difficulties occur from this account of the Falasha; for, though they say they came from Jerusalem in the time of Solomon, and from different tribes, yet there is but one language amongst them all, and that is not Hebrew or Samaritan, neither of which they read or understand; nor is their answer to this objection satisfactory, for very obvious reasons.

Ludolf, the most learned man that has writ upon the subject, says, that it is apparent the Ethiopic
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Old Testament, at least the Pentateuch, was copied from the Septuagint, because of the many Grecisms to be found in it; and the names of birds and precious stones, and some other passages that appear literally to be translated from the Greek. He imagines also, that the present Abyssinian version is the work of Frumentius their first bishop, when Abyssinia was converted to Christianity under Abreha and Atzbeha, about the year 333 after Christ, or a few years later.

Although I brought with me all the Abyssinian books of the Old Testament, (if it is a translation) I have not yet had time to make the comparison here alluded to, but have left them, for the curiosity of the public, deposited in the British Museum, hoping that some man of learning or curiosity would do this for me. In the mean time I must observe, that it is much more natural to suppose that the Greeks, comparing the copies together, expunged the words or passages they found differing from the Septuagint, and replaced them from thence, as this would not offend the Jews, who very well knew that those who translated the Septuagint version were all Jews themselves.

Now, as the Abyssinian copy of the Holy Scriptures, in Mr. Ludolf's opinion, was translated by Frumentius above 330 after Christ, and the Septuagint version, in the days of Philadelphus or Ptolemy II. above 160 years before Christ, it will follow, that, if the present Jews use the copy translated by Frumentius, and, if that was taken from the Septuagint, the Jews must have been above 400 years without any books whatsoever at the time of the

the conversion by Frumentius : So they must have had all the Jewish law, which is in perfect vigour and force among them, all their Levitical observances, their purifications, atonements, abstinences, and sacrifices, all depending upon their memory, without writing, at least for that long space of 400 years.

This, though not absolutely impossible, is surely very nearly so. We know, that, at Jerusalem itself, the seat of Jewish law and learning, idolatry happening to prevail, during the short reigns of only four kings, the law, in that interval, became so perfectly forgotten and unknown that a copy of it being accidentally found and read by Josiah, that prince, upon his first learning its contents, was so astonished at the deviations from it, that he apprehended the immediate destruction of the whole city and people. To this I shall only add, that whoever considers the stiff-neckedness, stubbornness, and obstinacy, which were ever the characteristics of this Jewish nation, they will not easily believe that they did ever *willingly* “ receive the *Old Testament* from “ a people who were the avowed champions of the “ *New.*”

They have, indeed, no knowledge of the New Testament but from conversation ; and do not curse it, but treat it as a folly where it supposes the Messiah come, who, they seem to think, is to be a temporal prince, prophet, priest, and conqueror.

Still, it is not probable that a Jew would receive the law and the prophets from a Christian, without absolute necessity, though they might very well receive such a copy from a brother Jew, which all

the Abyssinians were, when this translation was made. Nor would this, as I say, hinder them from following a copy really made by Jews from the text itself, such as the Septuagint actually was. But, I confess, great difficulties occur on every side, and I despair of having them solved, unless by an able, deliberate analysis of the specimen of the Falasha language which I have preserved, in which I earnestly request the concurrence of the learned. A book of the length of the Canticles contains words enough to judge upon the question, Whence the Falasha came, and what is the probable cause they had not a translation in their own tongue, since a version became necessary?

I have less doubt that Frumentius translated the New Testament, as he must have had assistance from those of his own communion in Egypt; and this is a further reason why I believe that, at his coming, he found the Old Testament already translated into the Ethiopic language and character, because Bagla, or Geez, was an unknown letter, and the language unknown, not only to him, but likewise to every province in Abyssinia, except Tigré; so that it would have cost him no more pains to teach the nation the Greek character and Greek language, than to have translated the New Testament into Ethiopic, using the Geez character, which was equally unknown, unless in Tigré. The saving of time and labour would have been very material to him; he would have used the whole scriptures, as received in his own church, and the Greek letter and language would have been just as easily attained in Amhara, as the Geez; and those people, even of
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the province of Tigré, that had not yet learned to read, would have written the Greek character as easily as their own. I do not know that so early there was any Arabic translation of the Old Testament; if there was, the same reasons would have militated for his preferring this; and still he had but the New Testament to undertake. But having found the books of the Old Testament already translated into Geez, this altered the case; and he, very properly, continued the gospel in that language and letter also, that it might be a testimony for the Christians, and against the Jews, as it was intended.

C H A P. VII.

Books in Use in Abyssinia—Enoch—Abyssinia not converted by the Apostles—Conversion from Judaism to Christianity by Frumentius.

THE Abyssinians have the whole scriptures entire as we have, and count the same number of books; but they divide them in another manner, at least in private hands, few of them, from extreme poverty, being able to purchase the whole, either of the historical or prophetic books of the Old Testament. The same may be said of the New, for copies containing the whole of it are very scarce. Indeed no where, unless in churches, do you see more than the Gospels, or the Acts of the Apostles, in one person's possession, and it must not be an ordinary man that possesses even these.

Many books of the Old Testament are forgot, so that it is the same trouble to procure them, even in churches, for the purpose of copying, as to consult old records long covered with dust and rubbish. The Revelation of St. John is a piece of favourite reading among them. Its title is, *the vision of John Abou Kalamfis*, which seems to me to be a corruption of *Apocalypsis*. At the same time, we can hardly imagine that Frumentius, a Greek and a man of letters, should make so strange a mistake. There is no such thing as distinctions between canonical and apocryphal

apocryphal books. Bell and the Dragon, and the Acts of the Apostles, are read with equal devotion; and, for the most part, I am afraid, with equal edification; and it is in the spirit of truth, and not of ridicule, that I say St. George and his Dragon, from idle legends only, are objects of veneration, nearly as great as any of the heroes in the Old Testament, or saints in the New. The Song of Solomon is a favourite piece of reading among the old priests; but forbidden to the young ones, to the deacons, laymen, and women. The Abyssinians believe, that this song was made by Solomon in praise of Pharaoh's daughter; and do not think, as some of our divines are disposed to do, that there is in it any mystery or allegory respecting Christ and the church. It may be asked, Why did I choose to have this book translated, seeing that it was to be attended with this particular difficulty? To this I answer, The choice was not mine, nor did I at once know all the difficulty. The first I pitched upon was the book of Ruth, as being the shortest; but the subject did not please the scribes and priests who were to copy for me, and I found it would not do. They then chose the Song of Solomon, and engaged to go through with it; and I recommended it to two or three young scribes, who completed the copy by themselves and their friends. I was obliged to procure licence for these scribes whom I employed in translating it into the different languages; but it was a permission of course, and met with no real, though some pretended difficulty.

A nephew

A nephew of Abba Salama*, the Acab Saat, a young man of no common genius, asked leave from his uncle before he began the translation; to which Salama answered, alluding to an old law, That if he attempted such a thing, he should be killed as they do sheep; but, if I would give *him* the money, he would permit it. I should not have taken any notice of this; but some of the young men having told it to Ras Michael †, who perfectly guessed the matter, he called upon the scribe, and asked what his uncle had said to him; who told him very plainly, that, if he began the translation, his throat should be cut like that of a sheep. One day Michael asked Abba Salama, whether that was true; he answered in the affirmative, and seemed disposed to be talkative. “Then,” said the Ras to the young man, “your uncle declares, if you write the book for Ya-
 “goubé, he shall cut your throat like a sheep;
 “and I say to you, I swear by St. Michael, I will
 “put you to death like an ass if you don’t write
 “it; consider with yourself which of the risks
 “you’ll run, and come to me in eight days, and
 “make your choice.” But, before the eighth day, he brought me the book, very well pleased at having an excuse for receiving the price of the copy. Abba Salama complained of this at another time when I was present, and the name of *frank* was invidiously

* I shall have occasion to speak much of this priest in the sequel. He was a most inveterate and dangerous enemy to all Europeans, the principal ecclesiastical officer in the king’s house.

† Then Prime Minister, concerning whom much is to be said hereafter.

vidiously mentioned ; but he only got a stern look and word from Ras : “ Hold your tongue, Sir, you don’t know what you say ; you don’t know that you are a fool, Sir, but I do ; if you talk much you will publish it to all the world.”

After the New Testament they place the constitutions of the Apostles, which they call *Synnodos*, which, as far as the cases or doctrines apply, we may say is the written law of the country. These were translated out of the Arabic. They have next a general liturgy, or book of common prayer, besides several others peculiar to certain festivals, under whose names they go. The next is a very large voluminous book, called *Haimanout Abou*, chiefly a collection from the works of different Greek fathers, treating of, or explaining several heresies, or disputed points of faith, in the ancient Greek Church. Translations of the works of St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Chrysostome, and St. Cyril, are likewise current among them. The two last I never saw ; and only fragments of St. Athanasius ; but they are certainly extant.

The next is the Synaxar, or the *Flos Sanctorum*, in which the miracles and lives, or lies of their Saints, are at large, recorded, in four monstrous volumes in folio, stuffed full of fables of the most incredible kind. They have a saint that wrestled with the devil in shape of a serpent nine miles long, threw him from a mountain, and killed him. Another saint who converted the devil, who turned monk, and lived in great holiness for forty years after his conversion, doing penance for having tempted our Saviour upon the mountain : what be-
came

came of him after they do not say. Again, another faint, that never ate nor drank from his mother's womb, went to Jerusalem, and said mass every day at the holy sepulchre, and came home at night in the shape of a stork. The last I shall mention was a faint, who, being very sick, and his stomach in disorder, took a longing for partridges; he called upon a brace of them to come him, and immediately two roasted partridges came *flying*, and rested upon his plate, to be devoured. These stories are circumstantially told and vouched by unexceptionable people, and were a grievous stumbling-block to the Jesuits, who could not pretend their own miracles were either better established, or more worthy of belief.

There are other books of less size and consequence, particularly the Organon Denghel, or the Virgin Mary's Musical Instrument, composed by Abba George about the year 1440, much valued for the purity of its language, though he himself was an Armenian. The last of this Ethiopic library is the book of Enoch*. Upon hearing this book first mentioned, many literati in Europe had a wonderful desire to see it, thinking that, no doubt, many secrets and unknown histories might be drawn from it. Upon this some impostor, getting an Ethiopic book into his hands, wrote for the title, *The Prophecies of Enoch*, upon the front page of it. M. Pierisc † no sooner heard of it than he purchased it of the impostor for a considerable sum of money: being

* Vid. Origen contra Celsum, lib. 5. Tertull. de Idolol. c. 4. Drus in suo Enoch. Bangius in Cælo Orientis Exercit. 1. quæst. 5, and 6.

† Gassend. in vita Pierisc. lib. 5.

being placed afterwards in Cardinal Mazarine's library, where Mr. Ludolf had access to it, he found it was a Gnostic book upon mysteries in heaven and earth, but which mentioned not a word of Enoch, or his prophecy, from beginning to end; and, from this disappointment, he takes upon him to deny the existence of any such book any where else. This, however is a mistake; for, as a public return for the many obligations I had received from every rank of that most humane, polite, and scientific nation, and more especially from the sovereign Louis XV. I gave to his cabinet a part of every thing curious I had collected abroad; which was received with that degree of consideration and attention that cannot fail to determine every traveller of a liberal mind to follow my example.

Amongst the articles I consigned to the library at Paris, was a very beautiful and magnificent copy of the prophecies of Enoch, in large quarto; another is amongst the books of scripture which I brought home, standing immediately before the book of Job, which is its proper place in the Abyssinian canon; and a third copy I have presented to the Bodleian library at Oxford, by the hands of Dr. Douglas the Bishop of Carlisle. The more ancient history of that book is well known. The church at first looked upon it as apocryphal; and as it was quoted in the book of Jude, the same suspicion fell upon that book also. For this reason, the council of Nice threw the epistle of Jude out of the canon, but the council of Trent arguing better, replaced the apostle in the canon as before.

Here

Here we may observe by the way, that Jude's appealing to the apocryphal books did by no means import, that either he believed or warranted the truth of them. But it was an argument, *a fortiori*, which our Saviour himself often makes use of, and amounts to no more than this, You, says he to the Jews, deny certain facts, which must be from prejudice, because you have them allowed in your own books, and believe them there. And a very strong and fair way of arguing it is, but this is by no means any allowance that they are true. In the same manner, You, says Jude, do not believe the coming of Christ and a latter judgment; yet your ancient Enoch, whom you suppose was the seventh from Adam, tells you this plainly, and in so many words, long ago. And indeed the quotation is, word for word the same, in the second chapter of the book.

All that material to say further concerning the book of Enoch is, that it is a Gnostic book, containing the age of the Emims, Anakims, and Egregores, supposed descendents of the sons of God, when they fell in love with the daughters of men, and had sons who were giants. These giants do not seem to have been so charitable to the sons and daughters of men, as their fathers had been. For, first they began to eat all the beasts of the earth, they then fell upon the birds and fishes, and ate them also; their hunger being not yet satisfied, they ate all the corn, all men's labour, all the trees and bushes, and, not content yet, they fell to eating the men themselves. The men (like our modern sailors with the savages) were not afraid of dying,
but

but very much so of being eaten after death. At length they cry to God against the wrongs the giants had done them, and God sends a flood which drowns both them and the giants.

Such is the reparation which this ingenious author has thought proper to attribute to Providence, in answer to the first, and the best-founded complaints that were made to him by man. I think this exhausts about four or five of the first chapters. It is not the fourth part of the book; but my curiosity led me no further. The catastrophe of the giants, and the justice of the catastrophe, had fully satisfied me.

I cannot but recollect, that when it was known in England that I had presented this book to the library of the King of France, without staying a few days, to give me time to reach London, when our learned countrymen might have had an opportunity of perusing at leisure another copy of this book, Doctor Woide set out for Paris, with letters from the Secretary of State to Lord Stormont, Ambassador at that court, desiring him to assist the doctor in procuring access to my present, by permission from his Most Christian Majesty. This he accordingly obtained, and a translation of the work was brought over; but, I know not why, it was nowhere appeared. I fancy Dr. Woide was not much more pleased with the conduct of the giants than I was.

I shall conclude with one particular, which is a curious one: The Synaxar (what the Catholics call their Flos Sanctorum, or the lives and miracles of their saints), giving the History of the Abyssinian conversion

conversion to Christianity in the year 333, says, that when Frumentius and Cœdeseus were introduced to the king, who was a minor, they found him reading the Psalms of David.

This book, or that of Enoch, does by no means prove that they were at that time Jews. For these two were in as great authority among the Pagans, who professed Sabaism, the first religion of the East, and especially of the *Shepherds*, as among the Jews. These being continued also in the same letter and character among the Abyssinians from the beginning convinces me that there has not been any other writing in this country, or the south of Arabia, since that which rose from the Hieroglyphics.

The Abyssinian history begins now to rid itself of part of that confusion which is almost a constant attendant upon the very few annals yet preserved of barbarous nations in very ancient times. It is certain, from their history, that Bazen was contemporary with Augustus, that he reigned sixteen years, and that the birth of our Saviour fell on the 8th year of that prince, so that the 8th year of Bazen was the first of Christ.

Amha Yafous, prince of Shoa, a province to which the small remains of the line of Solomon fled upon a catastrophe, I shall have occasion to mention, gave me the following list of the kings of Abyssinia since the time of which we are now speaking. From him I procured all the books of the Annals of Abyssinia, which have served me to compose this history, excepting two, one given me by the King, the other the Chronicle of Axum, by Ras Michael Governor of Tigré.

SHOA LIST OF PRINCES.

Bazen,	Araad,
Tzenaf Segued,	Saladoba,
Garima Asferi,	Alamida,
Saraada	Tezhana,
Tzion,	Caleb, 522,
Sargai,	Guebra Mascal,
Bagamai,	Constantine,
Jan Segued,	Bazzer,
Tzion Heges,	Azbeha,
Moal Genha,	Armaha,
Saif Araad,	Jan Asfeha,
Agedar,	Jan Segued,
Abreha and Atzbeha,	Fere Sanai,
333.	Aderaaz,
Asfeha,	Aizor,
Arphad and Amzi,	

Del Naad, 960*.

This list is kept in the monastery of Debra Libanos in Shoa ; the Abyssinians receive it without any sort of doubt, though to me it seems very exceptionable : If it were genuine, it would put this monarchy in a very respectable light in point of antiquity.

Great confusion has arisen in these old lists, from their kings having always two, and sometimes three names. The first is their christened name, their second a nick, or bye-name, and the third they take upon their inauguration. There is, likewise, another

* The length of these princes reigns are so great as to become incredible ; but, as we have nothing further of their history but their names, we have no data upon which to reform them.

cause of mistake, which is, when two names occur, one of a king, the other the quality of a king only, these are set down as two brothers. For example, Atzbeha is the *bleſſed*, or *the ſaint*; and I very much ſuſpect, therefore, that Atzbeha and Abreha, ſaid to be two brothers, only mean Abraham the *bleſſed* or *the ſaint*; becauſe in that prince's time, the country was converted to Chriſtianity; Caleb* and Eleſbaas, were long thought to be contemporary princes, till it was found out, by inſpecting the ancient authors of thoſe times, that this was only the name or quality of *bleſſed*, or *ſaint*, given to Caleb, in conſequence of his expedition into Arabia againſt Phineas king of the Jews, and perſecutor of the Chriſtians.

There are four very intereſting events, in the courſe of the reign of theſe princes. The firſt and greateſt we have already mentioned, the birth of Chriſt in the 8th year of Bazen. The ſecond is the converſion of Abyſſinia to Chriſtianity, in the reign of Abreha and Atzbeha, in the year of Chriſt 333, according to our account. The third the war with the Jews under Caleb. The fourth, the maſſacre of the princes on the mountain of Damo. The time and circumſtances of all theſe are well known, and I ſhall relate them in their turn with the brevity becoming a hiſtorian.

Some eccleſiaſtical † writers, rather from attachment to particular ſyſtems, than from any conviction that the opinion they eſpouſe is truth, would per-

* Caleb el Atzbeha, which has been made Eleſbas throwing away the t.

† Sarius Tom. 5. d. 24. O. Card. Baronius, Tom. 7. Annal. A. C. 522. N. 23.

persuade us, that the conversion of Abyssinia to Christianity happened at the beginning of this period, that is, soon after the reign of Bazen; others, that Saint Matthias, or Saint Bartholomew, or some others of the Apostles, after their mission to teach the nations, first preached here the faith of Christ, and converted this people to it. It is also said, that the eunuch baptized by Philip, upon his return to Candace, became the Apostle of that nation, which, from his preaching, believed in Christ and his gospel. All these might pass for dreams not worthy of examination, if they were not invented for particular purposes.

Till the death of Christ, who lived several years after Bazen, very few Jews had been converted even in Judea. We have no account in scripture that induces us to believe, that the Apostles went to any great distance from each other immediately after the crucifixion. Nay, we know positively, they did not, but lived in community together for a considerable time. Besides, it is not probable if the Abyssinians were converted by any of the Apostles, that, for the space of 300 years, they should remain without bishops, and without church-government, in the neighbourhood of many states where churches were already formed, without calling to their assistance some members of these churches, who might, at least, inform them of the purport of the councils held, and canons made by them during that space of 300 years; for this was absolutely necessary to preserve orthodoxy, and the communion between this, and the churches of that time. And it should be observed, that if, in Philip's time,
the

the Christian religion had not penetrated (as we see in effect it had not) into the court of Candace, so much nearer Egypt, it did not surely reach so early into the more distant mountainous country of Abyssinia; and if the Ethiopia, where Candace reigned, was the same as Abyssinia, the story of the queen of Saba must be given up as a falsehood; for, in that case, there would be a woman sitting upon the throne of that country 500 years after she was excluded by a solemn deliberate fundamental law of the land.

But it is known, from credible writers, engaged in no controversy, that this Candace reigned upon the Nile in Atbara, much nearer Egypt. Her capital also was taken in the time of Augustus, a few years before the Conversion, by Philip; and we shall have occasion often to mention her successors and her kingdom, as existing in the reign of the Abyssinian kings, long after the Mahometan conquest; they existed when I passed through Atbara, and do undoubtedly exist there to this day. What puts an end to all this argument is a matter of fact, which is, that the Abyssinians continued Jews and Pagans, and were found to be so above 300 years after the time of the Apostles. Instead, therefore, of taking the first of this list (Bazen) for the prince under whom Abyssinia was converted from Judaism, as authors have advanced, in conformity to the Abyssinian annals, we shall fix upon the 13th (Abreha and Atzbeha, whom we believe to be but one prince) and, before we enter into the narrative of that remarkable event, we shall observe, that, from Bazen to Abreha, being 341 years inclusive, the

the eighth of Bazen being the first of Christ, by this account of the conversion, which happened under Abreha and Atzbeha, it must have been about 333 years after Christ, or 341 after Bazen.

But we certainly know, that the first bishop, ordained for the conversion of Abyssinia, was sent from Alexandria by St. Athanasius, who was himself ordained to that See about the year 326. Therefore, any account, prior to this ordination and conversion, must be false, and this conversion and ordination must have therefore happened about the year 330, or possibly some few years later; for Socrates * says, that St. Athanasius himself was then but newly elected to the See of Alexandria.

In order to clear our way of difficulties, before we begin the narrative of the conversion, we shall observe, in this place, the reason I just hinted at, why some ecclesiastical writers had attributed the conversion of Abyssinia to the Apostles. There was found, or pretended to be found in Alexandria, a canon, of a council said to be that of Nice, and this canon had never before been known, nor ever seen in any other place, or in any language, except the Arabic; and, from inspection, I may add, that it is such Arabic that scarce will convey the meaning it was intended. Indeed, if it be construed according to the strict rule of grammar, it will not convey any sense at all. This canon regulated the precedency of the Abuna of Ethiopia in all after councils, and it places him immediately after the prelate of Seleucia. This most honourable anti-

VOL. II.

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quity

* Ludolf, vol. 2. lib. iii. cap. 2.

quity was looked upon and boasted of for their own purposes by the Jesuits, as a discovery of infinite value to the church of Ethiopia.

I shall only make one other observation to obviate a difficulty which will occur in reading what is to follow. The Abyssinian history plainly and positively says, that when Frumentius (the apostle of the Abyssinians) came first into that country, a queen reigned, which is an absolute contradiction to what we have already stated, and would seem to favour the story of queen Candace. To this I answer, That though it be true that all women are excluded from the Abyssinian throne, yet it is as true that there is a law, or custom, as strictly observed as the other, that the queen upon whose head the king shall have put the crown in his life-time, it matters not whether it be her husband or son, or any other relation, that woman is regent of the kingdom, and guardian of every minor king, as long as she shall live. Supposing, therefore, a queen to be crowned by her husband, which husband should die and leave a son, all the brothers and uncles of that son would be banished, and confined prisoners to the mountain, and the queen would have the care of the kingdom, and of the king, during his minority. If her son, moreover, was to die, and a minor succeed who was a collateral, or no relation to her, brought, perhaps, from the mountain, she would still be regent; nor does her office cease but by the king's coming of age, whose education, cloathing, and maintenance, she, in the mean time, absolutely directs, according to her own will; nor can there be another regent during her

her

her life-time. This regent, for life, is called *Iteghè*; and this was probably the situation of the kingdom at the time we mention, as history informs us the king was then a minor, and consequently his education, as well as the government of his kingdom and household, were, as they appear to have been, in the queen, or *Iteghè's* hands; of this office I shall speak more in its proper place.

Meropius, a philosopher at Tyre, a Greek by nation and religion, had taken a passage in a ship on the Red Sea to India, and had with him two young men, Frumentius and Cædæsius, whom he intended to bring up to trade, after having given them a very liberal education. It happened their vessel was cast away on a rock upon the coast of Abyssinia. Meropius, defending himself, was slain by the natives, and the two boys carried to Axum, the capital of Abyssinia, where the court then resided. Though young, they soon began to shew the advantages attending a liberal education. They acquired the language very speedily; and, as that country is naturally inclined to admire strangers, these were soon looked upon as two prodigies. Cædæsius, probably the dullest of the two, was set over the king's household and wardrobe, a place that has been filled constantly by a stranger of that nation to this very day. Frumentius was judged worthy by the queen to have the care of the young prince's education, to which he dedicated himself entirely.

After having instructed his pupil in all sorts of learning, he strongly impressed him with a love and veneration for the Christian religion; after which he himself set out for Alexandria, where, as has

been already said, he found St. Athanasius * newly elected to that See.

He related to him briefly what had passed in Ethiopia, and the great hopes of the conversion of that nation, if proper pastors were sent to instruct them. Athanasius embraced that opportunity with all the earnestness that became his station and profession. He ordained Frumentius bishop of that country, who instantly returned and found the young king his pupil in the same good disposition as formerly; he embraced Christianity; the greatest part of Abyssinia followed his example, and the church of Ethiopia continued with his bishop in perfect unity and friendship till his death; and though great troubles arose from heresies being propagated in the East, that church, and the fountain whence it derived its faith (Alexandria,) remained uncontaminated by any false doctrine.

But it was not long after this, that Arianism broke out under Constantius the Emperor, and was strongly favoured by him. We have indeed a letter of St. Athanasius to that Emperor, who had applied to him to depose Frumentius from his See for refusing to embrace that heresy, or admit it into his diocese.

It should seem, that this conversion of Abyssinia was quietly conducted, and without blood; and this is the more remarkable, that it was the second radical change of religion, effected in the same manner, and with the same facility and moderation. No fanatic preachers, no warm saints or madmen,
ambitious

* Vid. Baron, tom. 4. p. 331. et alibi passim.

ambitious to make or to be made martyrs, disturbed either of these happy events, in this wife, though barbarous nation, so as to involve them in bloodshed: no persecution was the consequence of this difference of tenets, and if wars did follow, it was from matters merely temporal.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

War of the Elephant—First appearance of the Small-Pox—Jews persecute the Christians in Arabia—Defeated by the Abyssinians—Mahomet pretends a divine Mission—Opinion concerning the Koran—Revolution under Judith—Restoration of the Line of Solomon from Shoa.

IN the reigns of the princes Areha and Atzbeha, the Abyssinian annals mention an expedition to have happened into the farthest part of Arabia Felix, which the Arabian authors, and indeed Mahomet himself in the Koran calls by the name of the War of the Elephant, and the cause of it was this. There was a temple nearly in the middle of the peninsula of Arabia, that had been held in the greatest veneration for about 1400 years. The Arabs say, that Adam, when shut out of paradise, pitched his tent on this spot; while Eve, from some accident or other I am not acquainted with, died and was buried on the shore of the Red Sea, at Jidda. Two days journey east from this place, her grave, of green sods about fifty yards in length, is shewn to this day. In this temple also was a black stone, upon which Jacob saw the vision mentioned in scripture, of the angels descending, and ascending into Heaven. It is likewise said, with more appearance of probability, that this temple was

was built by Sefostris, in his voyage to Arabia Felix, and that he was worshipped there under the name of Ofiris, as he then was in every part of Egypt.

The great veneration the neighbouring nations paid to this tower, and idol, suggested the very natural thought of making the temple the market for the trade from Africa and India; the liberty of which, we may suppose, had been in some measure restrained, by the settlements which foreign nations had made on both coasts of the Red Sea. To remedy which, they chose this town in the heart of the country, accessible on all sides, and commanded on none, calling it *Becca*, which signifies the House; though Mahomet, after breaking the idol and dedicating the temple to the true God, named it *Mecca*, under which name it has been continued, the centre or great mart of the India trade to this day.

In order to divert this trade into a channel more convenient for his present dominions, Abreha built a very large church or temple, in the country of the Homerites, and nearer the Indian Ocean. To encourage also the resort to this place, he extended to it all the privileges, protection, and emoluments, that belonged to the Pagan temple of *Mecca*.

One particular tribe of Arabs, called *Beni Koraish*, had the care of the *Caba*, for so the round tower of *Mecca* was called. These people were exceedingly alarmed at the prospect of their temple being at once deserted, both by its votaries and merchants, to prevent which, a party of them, in the night, entered Abreha's temple, and having first burned what part of it could be consumed, they polluted

luted the part that remained, by besmearing it over with human excrements.

This violent sacrilege and affront was sooner ported to Abreha, who, mounted upon a white elephant at the head of a considerable army, resolved, in return, to destroy the temple of Mecca. With this intent, he marched through that stripe of low country along the sea, called Tehama, where he met with no opposition, nor suffered any distress but from want of water; after which, at the head of his army, he sat down before Mecca, as he supposed.

Abou Thaleb (Mahomet's grandfather, as it is thought) was then keeper of the Caba, who had interest with his countrymen the Beni Koreish to prevail upon them to make no resistance, nor shew any signs of wishing to make a defence. He had presented himself early to Abreha upon his march. There was a temple of Osiris at Taief; which, as a rival to that of Mecca, was looked upon by the Beni Koreish with a jealous eye. Abreha was so far misled by the intelligence given him by Abou Thaleb, that he mistook the Temple of Taief for that of Mecca, and razed it to the foundation, after which he prepared to return home.

He was soon after informed of his mistake, and not repenting of what he had already done, resolved to destroy Mecca also. Abou Thaleb, however, had never left his side; by his great hospitality, and the plenty he procured to the Emperor's army, he so gained Abreha, that hearing, on enquiry, he was no mean man, but a prince of the tribe of Beni Koreish, noble Arabs, he obliged him to sit in his presence,

presence, and kept him constantly with him as a companion. At last, not knowing how to reward him sufficiently, Abreha desired him to ask any thing in his power to grant, and he would satisfy him. Abou Thaleb, taking him at his word, wished to be provided with a man, that should bring back forty oxen, the soldiers had stolen from him.

Abreha, who expected that the favour he was to ask, was to spare the Temple, which he had in that case resolved in his mind to do, could not conceal his astonishment at so silly a request, and he could not help testifying this to Abou Thaleb, in a manner that shewed it had lowered him in his esteem. Abou Thaleb, smiling, replied very calmly, If that before you is the Temple of God, as I believe it is, you shall never destroy it, if it is his will that it should stand: If it is not the Temple of God, or, (which is the same thing) if he has ordained that you should destroy it, I shall not only assist you in demolishing it, but shall help you in carrying away the last stone of it upon my shoulders: But as for me, I am a shepherd, and the care of cattle is my profession; twenty of the oxen which are stolen are not my own, and I shall be put in prison for them to-morrow; for neither you nor I can believe that this is an affair God will interfere in; and therefore I apply to you for a soldier who will seek the thief, and bring back my oxen, that my liberty be not taken from me.

Abreha had now refreshed his army, and, from regard to his guest, had not touched the Temple; when, says the Arabian author, there appeared, coming from the sea, a flock of birds called Ababil, having

having faces like lions, and each of them in his claws, holding a small stone like a pea, which he let fall upon Abreha's army, so that they all were destroyed. The author of the manuscript * from which I have taken this fable, and which is also related by several other historians, and mentioned by Mahomet in the Koran, does not seem to swallow the story implicitly. For he says, that there is no bird that has a face like a lion, that Abou Thaleb was a Pagan, Mahomet being not then come, and that the Christians were worshippers of the true God, the God of Mahomet; and, therefore, if any miracle was wrought here, it was a miracle of the devil, a victory in favour of Paganism, and destructive of the belief of the true God. In conclusion, he says, that it was at this time that the small-pox and measles first broke out in Arabia, and almost totally destroyed the army of Abreha. But if the stone, as big as a pea, thrown by the Ababil, had killed Abreha's army to the last man, it does not appear how any of them could die afterwards, either by the small-pox or measles.

All that is material, however, to us, in this fact, is, that the time of the siege of Mecca will be the æra of the first appearance of that terrible disease, the small-pox, which we shall set down about the year 356; and it is highly probable, from other circumstances, that the Abyssinian army was the first victim to it.

As for the church Abreha built near the Indian Ocean, it continued free from any further insult till the

* El. Hameefy's Siege of Mecca.

the Mahometan conquest of Arabia Felix, when it was finally destroyed in the Khalifat * of Omar. This is the Abyssinian account, and this the Arabian history of the War of the Elephant, which I have stated as found in the books of the most credible writers of those times.

But it is my duty to put the reader upon his guard, against adopting literally what is here set down, without being satisfied of the validity of the objection that may be made against the narrative in general. Abreha reigned 27 years; he was converted to Christianity in 333, and died in 360; now, it is scarcely possible, in the short space of 27 years, that all Abyssinia and Arabia could be converted to Christianity. The conversion of the Abyssinians is represented to be a work of little time, but the Arab author, Hameesy, says, that even Arabia Felix was full of churches when this expedition took place, which is very improbable. And, what adds still more to the improbability, is, that part of the story which states that Abreha conversed with Mahomet's father, or grandfather. For, supposing the expedition in 356, Mahomet's birth was in 558, so there will remain 202 years, by much too long a period for two lives. I do believe we must bring this expedition down much lower than the reign of Abreha and Atzbeha, the reason of which we shall see afterwards.

As early as the commencement of the African trade with Palestine, the Jewish religion had spread itself far into Arabia, but, after the destruction of the

* Fetaat el Yemen.

the temple by Titus, a great increase both of number and wealth had made that people absolute masters in many parts of that peninsula. In the Neged, and as far up as Medina, petty princes, calling themselves kings, were established; who, being trained in the wars of Palestine, became very formidable among the pacific commercial nations of Arabia, deeply sunk into Greek degeneracy.

Phineas, a prince of that nation from Medina, having beat St. Aretas, the Governor of Najiran, began to persecute the Christians by a new species of cruelty, by ordering certain furnaces, or pits full of fire, to be prepared, into which he threw as many of the inhabitants of Najiran as refused to renounce Christianity. Among these was Aretas, so called by the Greeks, Aryat by the Arabs, and Hawaryat, which signifies the *evangelical*, by the Abyssinians, together with ninety of his companions. Mahomet, in his Koran, mentions, this tyrant by the name of the Master of the *fiery pits*, without either condemning or praising the execution; only saying, 'the sufferers shall be witness against him at the last day.'

Justin, the Greek Emperor, was then employed in an unsuccessful war with the Persians, so that he could not give any assistance to the afflicted Christians in Arabia, but in the year 522 he sent an embassy to Caleb, or Elefbaas, king of Abyssinia, intreating him to interfere in favour of the Christians of Najiran, as he too was of the Greek church. On the Emperor's first request, Caleb sent orders to Abreha, Governor of Yemen, to march to the assistance of Aretas, the son of him who was burnt,
and

and who was then collecting troops. Strengthened by this reinforcement, the young soldier did not think proper to delay the revenging his father's death, till the arrival of the Emperor; but having come up with Phineas, who was ferrying his troops over an arm of the sea, he entirely routed them, and obliged their prince, for fear of being taken, to swim with his horse to the nearest shore. It was not long before the Emperor had crossed the Red Sea with his army; nor had Phineas lost any time in collecting his scattered forces to oppose him. A battle was the consequence, in which the fortune of Caleb again prevailed.

It would appear that the part of Arabia, near Najiran, which was the scene of Caleb's victory, belonged to the Grecian Emperor Justin, because Aretas applied directly to him at Constantinople for succour; and it was at Justin's request only, that Caleb marched to the assistance of Aretas, as a friend, but not as a sovereign; and as such also, Abreha, Governor of Yemen, marched to assist Aretas, with the Abyssinian troops, from the south of Arabia, against the stranger Jews, who were invaders from Palestine, and who had no connection with the Abyssinian Jewish Homerites, natives of the south coast of Arabia, opposite to Saba.

But neither of the Jewish kingdoms were destroyed by the victories of Caleb, or Abreha, nor the subsequent conquest of the Persians. In the Nege, or north part of Arabia, they continued not only after the appearance of Mahomet, but till after the Hegira. For it was in the 8th year of that æra that Hybar, the Jew, was besieged in his own castle

castle in Neged, and slain by Ali, Mahomet's son-in-law, from that time called Hydar Ali, or Ali the Lion.

Now the Arabian manuscripts says positively that this Abreha, who assisted Aretas, was Governor of Arabia Felix, or Yemen; for, by this last name, I shall hereafter call the part of the peninsula of Arabia belonging to the Abyssinians; so that he might very well have been the prince who conversed with Mahomet's father, and lost his army before Mecca, which will bring down the introduction of the small-pox to the year 522, just 100 years before the Hegira, and both Arabian and Abyssinian accounts might be then true.

The two officers who governed Yemen, and the opposite coast Azab, which, as we have above-mentioned, belonged to Abyssinia, were stiled *Najashi*, as was the king also, and both of them were crowned with gold. I am, therefore, persuaded, this is the reason of the confusion of names we meet in Arabian manuscripts, that treat of the sovereigns of Yemen. This, moreover, is the foundation of the story found in Arabic manuscripts, that Jaffar, Mahomet's brother, fled to the *Najashi*, who was governor of Yemen, and was kindly treated by him, and kept there till he joined his brother at the campaign of Hybarea. Soon after his great victory over the Beni Koreith, at the last battle of Beder Hunein, Mahomet is said to have written to the same *Najashi* a letter of thanks, for his kind entertainment of his brother, inviting him (as a reward) to embrace his religion, which the *Najashi* is supposed to have immediately complied with.

with. Now all this is in the Arabic books, and all this is true, as far as we can conjecture from the accounts of those times, very partially writ by a set of warm-headed bigotted zealots; such as all Arabic authors (historians of the time) undoubtedly are. The error only lies in the application of this story to the Najashi, or king of Abyffinia, situated far from the scene of these actions, on high cold mountains, very unfavourable to those rites, which, in low flat and warm countries, have been temptations to slothful and inactive men to embrace the Mahometan religion.

A most shameful prostitution of manners prevailed in the Greek church, as also innumerable heresies, which were first received as true tenets of their religion, but were soon after persecuted in a most uncharitable manner, as being erroneous. Their lies, their legends, their saints and miracles, and, above all, the abandoned behaviour of the priesthood, had brought their characters in Arabia almost as low as that of the detested Jew, and, had they been considered in their true light, they had been still lower.

The dictates of nature in the heart of the honest Pagan, constantly employed in long, lonely, and dangerous voyages, awakened him often to reflect who that Providence was that invisibly governed him, supplied his wants, and often mercifully saved him from the destruction into which his own ignorance or rashness were leading him. Poisoned by no system, perverted by no prejudice, he wished to know and adore his Benefactor, with purity and
simplicity

simplicity of heart free from these fopperies and follies with which ignorant priests and monks had disguised his worship. Possessed of charity, steady in his duty to his parents, full of veneration for his superiors, attentive and merciful even to his beasts; in a word containing in his heart the principles of the first religion, which God had inculcated in the heart of Noah, the Arab was already prepared to embrace a much more perfect one than what Christianity, at that time, disfigured by folly and superstition, appeared to him to be.

Mahomet, of the tribe of Beni Koreish (at whose instigation is uncertain) took upon himself to be the apostle of a new religion, pretending to have, for his only object, the worship of the true God. Ostensibly full of the morality of the Arab, of patience and self-denial, superior even to what is made necessary to salvation by the gospel, his religion, at the bottom, was but a system of blasphemy and falsehood, corruption and injustice. Mahomet and his tribe were most profoundly ignorant. There was not among them but one man that could write, and it was not doubted he was to be Mahomet's secretary, but unfortunately Mahomet could not read his writing. The story of the angel who brought him leaves of the Koran is well known, and so is all the rest of the fable. The wiser part of his own relations, indeed, laughed at the impudence of his pretending to have a communication with angels. Having, however, gained, as his apostles, some of the best soldiers of the tribe of Beni Koreish, and persisting with great uniformity in all his measures, he established a new religion upon

upon the ruins of idolatry and Sabaism, in the very temple of Mecca.

Nothing severe was enjoined by Mahomet, and the frequent prayers and washings with water which he directed, were gratifications to a sedentary people in a very hot country. The lightness of this yoke, therefore, recommended it rapidly to those who were disgusted with long fasting, penances, and pilgrimages. The poison of this false yet not severe religion, spread itself from that fountain to all the trading nations: India, Ethiopia, Africa, all Asia, suddenly embraced it; and every caravan carried into the bosom of its country people not more attached to trade, than zealous to preach and propagate their new faith. The Temple of Mecca (the old rendezvous of the India trade) perhaps was never more frequented than it is at this day, and the motives of the journey are equally trade and religion, as they were formerly.

I shall here mention, that the Arabs begun very soon to study letters, and came to be very partial to their own language; Mahomet himself so much so, that he held out his Koran, for its elegance alone, as a greater miracle than that of raising the dead. This was not universally allowed at that time; as there were even then compositions supposed to equal, if not to surpass it. In my time, I have seen in Britain a spirit of enthusiasm for this book in preference to all others, not inferior to that which possessed Mahomet's followers. Modern unbelievers (Sale and his disciples) have gone every length, but to say directly that it was dictated by the Spirit of God. Excepting the command in

Genesis, chap. i. ver. 3. "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light;" they defy us to shew in scripture a passage equal in sublimity to many in the Koran. Following, without inquiring, what has been handed down from one to the other, they would cram us with absurdities, which no man of sense can swallow. They say the Koran is composed in a style the most pure, and chaste, and that the tribe of Beni Koreish was the most polite, learned and noble of all the Arabs.

But to this I answer—The Beni Koreish were from the earliest days, according to their own* account, part established at Mecca, and part as robbers on the sea-coast, and they were all children of Ishmael. Whence then came their learning, or their superior nobility? Was it found in the desert, in the temple, or did the robbers bring it from the sea? Soiouthy, one of those most famous then for knowledge in the Arabic, has quoted from the Koran many hundred words, either Abyssinian, Indian, Persian, Ethiopic, Syrian, Hebrew, or Chaldaic, which he brings back to the root, and ascribes them to the nation they came from. Indeed it could not be otherwise; these caravans, continually crowding with their trade to Mecca, must have vitiated the original tongue by an introduction of new terms and new idioms, into a language labouring under a penury of vocabules. But shall any one for this persuade me, that a book is a model of pure, elegant, chaste English, in which there shall be a thousand words of Welsh, Irish, Gaelic, French, Spanish, Malabar, Mexican, and Laponian? What would

* El Hameefy.

would be thought of such a medley? or, at least, could it be recommended as a pattern for writing pure English?

What I say of the Koran may be applied to the language of Arabia in general: when it is called a copious language, and professors wisely tell you, that there are six hundred words for a sword, two hundred for honey, and three hundred that signify a lion, still I must observe, that this is not a copious language, but a confusion of languages: these, instead of distinct names, are only different epithets. For example, a lion in English may be called a young lion, a white lion, a small lion, a big lion: I style him moreover the fierce, the cruel, the enemy to man, the beast of the desert, the king of beasts, the lover of blood. Thus it is in Arabic; and yet it is said that all these are words for a lion. Take another example in a sword; the cutter, the divider, the friend of man, the master of towns, the maker of widows, the sharp, the straight, the crooked; which may be said in English as well as in Arabic.

The Arabs were a people who lived in a country for the most part, desert; their dwellings were tents, and their principal occupation feeding and breeding cattle, and they married their own family. The language therefore of such a people should be very poor; there is no variety of images in their whole country. They were always bad poets, as their works will testify; and if contrary to the general rule, the language of Arabia Deserta became a copious one, it must have been by the mixture of so many nations meeting and trading at Mecca. It

must, at the same time, have been the most corrupt, where there was the greatest concourse of strangers, and this was certainly among the Beni Koreish at the Caba. When, therefore, I hear people praising the Koran for the purity of its style, it puts me in mind of the old man in the comedy, whose reason for loving his nephew was, that he could read Greek; and being asked if he understood the Greek so read, he answered, Not a word of it, but the rumbling of the sound pleased him.

The war that had distracted all Arabia, first between the Greeks and Persians, the ubetween Mahomet and the Arabs, in support of his divine mission, had very much hurt the trade carried on by universal consent at the temple of Mecca. Caravans, when they dared venture out, were surprised upon every road, by the partizans of one side or the other. Both merchants and trade had taken their departure to the southward, and established themselves south of the Arabian Gulf, in places which (in ancient times) had been the markets for commerce, and the rendezvous of merchants. Azab, or Saba, was rebuilt; also Raheeta, Zeyla, Tajoura, Soomaal, in the Arabian Gulf, and a number of other towns on the Indian Ocean. The conquest of the Abyssinian territories in Arabia forced all those that yet remained to take refuge on the African side, in the little districts which now grew into consideration. Adel, Mara, Hadea, Aulsa, Wypo, Tarrish, and a number of other states, now assumed the name of kingdoms, and soon obtained power and wealth superior to many older ones.

The Governor of Yemen (or Najashi) converted now to the faith of Mahomet, retired to the African

can side of the Gulf. His government, long ago, having been shaken to the very foundation by the Arabian war, was at last totally destroyed. But the Indian trade at Adel wore a face of prosperity, that had the features of ancient times.

Without taking notice of every objection, and answering it, which has too polemical an appearance for a work of this kind, I hope I have removed the greatest part of the reader's difficulties, which have, for a long time, lain in the way, towards his understanding this part of the history. There is one however, remains, which the Arabian historians have mentioned, viz. that this Najashi, who embraced the faith of Mahomet, was avowedly of the royal family of Abyffinia. To this I answer, he certainly was a person of that rank, and was undoubtedly a nobleman, as there is no nobility in that country but from relationship to the king, and no person can be related to the king by the male line. But the females, even the daughters of those princes who are banished to the mountain, marry whom they please; and all the descendents of that marriage become noble, because they must be allied to the king. So far then they may truly assert, that the Mahometan Governor of Yemen, and his posterity, were this way related to the king of Abyffinia. But the supposition that any heirs male of this family became mussulmen, is, beyond any sort of doubt, without foundation or probability.

Omar, after subduing Egypt, destroyed the valuable library at Alexandria, but his successors thought very differently from him in the article of profane learning. Greek books of all kinds (especially those

those of Geometry, Astronomy, and Medicine,) were searched for every where and translated. Sciences flourished and were encouraged. Trade at the same time kept pace, and increased with knowledge. Geography and astronomy were every where diligently studied and solidly applied to make the voyages of men from place to place safe and expeditious. The Jews (constant servants of the Arabs) imbibed a considerable share of their taste for learning.

They had, at this time, increased very much in number. By the violence of the Mahometan conquests in Arabia and Egypt, where their sect did principally prevail, they became very powerful in Abyssinia. Arianism, and all the various heresies that distracted the Greek church, were received there in their turn from Egypt; the bonds of Christianity were dissolved, and people in general were much more willing to favour a new religion, than to agree with, or countenance any particular one of their own, if it differed from that which they adopted in the meekest trifle. This had destroyed their metropolis in Egypt, just now delivered up to the Saracens; and the disposition of the Abyssinians seemed so very much to resemble their brethren the Cophts, that a revolution in favour of Judaism was thought full as feasible in the country, as it had been in Egypt in favour of the newly-preached, but unequivocal religion of Mahomet.

An independent sovereignty, in one family of Jews had always been preserved on the mountain of Samen, and the royal residence was upon a high-pointed rock, called the Jews Rock: Several other
inaccessible

inaccessible mountains served as natural fortresses for this people, now grown very considerable by frequent accessions of strength from Palestine and Arabia, whence the Jews had been expelled. Gideon and Judith were then king and queen of the Jews, and their daughter Judith (whom in Amhara they call *Efther*, and sometimes *Sadt*, i. e. *fire* *) was a woman of great beauty, and talents for intrigue; had been married to the governor of a small district called Bugna, in the neighbourhood of Lasta, both which countries were likewise much infected with Judaism.

Judith had made so strong a party, that she resolved to attempt the subversion of the Christian religion, and, with it, the succession in the line of Solomon. The children of the royal family were at this time, in virtue of the old law, confined on the almost inaccessible mountain of Damo in Tigré. The short reign, sudden and unexpected death of the late king Aizor, and the desolation and contagion which an epidemical disease had spread both in court and capital, the weak state of Del Naad who was to succeed Aizor and was an infant; all these circumstances together, impressed Judith with an idea that now was the time to place her family upon the throne, and establish her religion by the extirpation of the race of Solomon. Accordingly she surpris'd the rock Damo, and slew the whole princes there, to the number, it is said, of about 400.

Some nobles of Amhara, upon the first news of the catastrophe at Damo, conveyed the infant king Del

* She is also called by Victor, *Tredda Gabez*.

Del Naad, now the only remaining prince of his race, into the powerful and loyal province of Shoa, and by this means the royal family was preserved to be again restored. Judith took possession of the throne in defiance of the law of the queen of Saba, by this the first interruption of the succession in the line of Solomon, and, contrary to what might have been expected from the violent means she had used to acquire the crown, she not only enjoyed it herself during a long reign of 40 years, but transmitted it also to five of her posterity, all of them barbarous names, originating probably in Lafta: These are said to be,

Totadem,
Jan Shum,
Garima Shum,
Harbai,
Marari.

Authors, as well Abyffinian as European, have differed widely about the duration of these reigns. All that the Abyffinians are agreed upon is, that this whole period was one scene of murder, violence, and oppression.

Judith and her descendents were succeeded by relations of their own, a noble family of Lafta. The history of this revolution, or cause of it, are lost and unknown in the country, and therefore vainly sought after elsewhere. What we know is, that with them the court returned to the Christian religion, and that they were still as different from their predecessors in manners as in religion. Though usurpers, as were the others, their names are preserved with every mark of respect and veneration. They are,

Tecla

Tecla Haimanout,
 Kedus Harbé,
 Itibarek,
 Lalibala,
 Imeranha Christos,
 Naacucto Laab.

Not being kings of the line of Solomon, no part of their history is recorded in the annals, unless that of Lalibala, who lived in the end of the twelfth, or beginning of the thirteenth century, and was a saint. The whole period of the usurpation, comprehending the long reign of Judith, will by this account be a little more than 300 years, in which time eleven princes are said to have sat upon the throne of Solomon, so that supposing her death to have been in the year 1000, each of these princes, at an average, will have been a little more than twenty-four years, and this is too much. But all this period is involved in darkness. We might guess, but since we are not able to do more, it answers no good purpose to do so much. I have followed the histories and traditions which are thought the most authentic in the country, the subject of which they treat, and where I found them; and though they may differ from other accounts given by European authors, this does not influence me, as I know that none of these authors could have any other authorities than those I have seen, and the difference only must be the fruit of idle imagination, and ill-founded conjectures of their own.

In the reign of Lalibala, near about the 1200, there was a great persecution in Egypt against the Christians, after the Saracen conquest, and especially
 against

against the masons, builders, and hewers of stone, who were looked upon by the Arabs as the greatest of abominations; this prince opened an asylum in his dominions to all fugitives of that kind, of whom he collected a prodigious number. Having before him as specimens the ancient works of the Troglodytes, he directed a number of churches to be hewn out of the solid rock in his native country of Lasta, where they remain untouched to this day, and where they will probably continue till the latest posterity. Large columns within are formed out of the solid rock, and every species of ornament preserved, that would have been executed in buildings of separate and detached stones, above ground.

This prince undertook to realize the favourite pretensions of the Abyssinians, to the power of turning the Nile out of its course, so that it should no longer be the cause of the fertility of Egypt, now in possession of the enemies of his religion. We may imagine, if it was in the power of man to accomplish this undertaking, it could have fallen into no better hands than those to whom Lalibala gave the execution of it; people driven from their native country by those Saracens who now were reaping the benefits of the river, in the places of those they had forced to seek habitations far from the benefit and pleasure afforded by its stream.

This prince did not adopt the wild idea of turning the course of the Nile out of its present channel; upon the possibility or impossibility of which, the argument (so warmly and so long agitated) always most improperly turns. His idea was to famish Egypt: and, as the fertility of that country depends not
upon

upon the ordinary stream, but the extraordinary increase of it by the tropical rains, he is said to have found, by an exact survey and calculation, that there ran on the summit, or highest part of the country, several rivers which could be intercepted by mines, and their stream directed into the low country southward, instead of joining the Nile, augmenting it and running northward. By this he found he should be able so to disappoint its increase, that it never would rise to a height proper to fit Egypt for cultivation. And thus far he was warranted in his ideas of succeeding (as I have been informed by the people of that country), that he did intersect and carry into the Indian Ocean, two very large rivers, which have ever since flowed that way, and he was carrying a level to the lake Zawaia, where many rivers empty themselves in the beginning of the rains, which would have effectually diverted the course of them all, and could not but in some degree diminish the current below.

Death, the ordinary enemy of all these stupendous Herculean undertakings, interposed too here, and put a stop to this enterprize of Lalibala. But Amha Yafous, prince of Shoa (in whose country part of these immense works were) a young man of great understanding, and with whom I lived several months in the most intimate friendship at Gondar, assured me that they were visible to this day; and that they were of a kind whose use could not be mistaken; that he himself had often visited them, and was convinced the undertaking was very possible with such hands, and in the circumstances things then were. He told me likewise, that, in a

written

written account which he had seen in Shoa, it was said that this prince was not interrupted by death in his undertaking, but persuaded by the monks, that if a greater quantity of water was let down into the dry kingdoms of Hadea, Mara, and Adel, increasing in population every day, and even now, almost equal in power to Abyffinia itself, these barren kingdoms would become the garden of the world ; and such a number of Saracens, dislodged from Egypt by the first appearance of the Nile's failing, would fly thither : that they would not only withdraw those countries from their obedience, but be strong enough to over-run the whole kingdom of Abyffinia. Upon this, as Amha Yafous informed me, Lalibala gave over his first scheme, which was the famishing of Egypt ; and that his next was employing the men in subterraneous churches ; a useless expence, but more level to the understanding of common men than the former.

Don Roderigo de Lima, ambaffador from the king of Portugal, in 1522, saw the remains of these vast works, and travelled in them several days, as we learn from Alvarez the chaplain and historian of that embaffy *, which we shall take notice of in its proper place.

Lalibala was distinguished both as a poet and an orator. The old fable, of a swarm of bees hanging to his lips in the cradle, is revived and applied to him as foretelling the sweetness of his elocution.

To Lalibala succeeded Imeranha Christos, remarkable for nothing but being the son of such a father

* See Alvarez, his relation of this Embaffy.

father as Lalibala, and father to such a son as Naacueto Laab; both of them distinguished for works very extraordinary, though very different in their kind. The first, that is those of the father we have already hinted at, consisting in great mechanical undertakings. The other was an operation of the mind, of still more difficult nature, a victory over ambition, the voluntary abdication of a crown to which he succeeded without imputation of any crime.

Tecla Haimanout, a monk and native of Abyssinia, had been ordained Abuna, and had founded the famous monastery of Debra Libanos in Shoa. He was at once celebrated for the sanctity of his life, the goodness of his understanding, and love to his country; and, by an extraordinary influence, obtained over the reigning king Naacueto Laab, he persuaded him, for conscience sake, to resign a crown, which (however it might be said with truth, that he received it from his father) could never be purged from the stain and crime of usurpation.

In all this time, the line of Solomon had been continued from Del Naad, who, we have seen, had escaped from the massacre of Damo, under Judith. Content with possessing the loyal province of Shoa, they continued their royal residence there, without having made one attempt, as far as history tells us, towards recovering their ancient kingdom.

RACE OF SOLOMON BANISHED, BUT REIGN-
ING IN SHOA.

Del Naad,
Mahaber Wedem,
Igba Sion,
Tzenaf Araad,
Nagash Zaré,
Asfeha,
Jacob,
Bahar Segued,
Adamas Segued,
Icon Amlac.

Naacueto Laab, of the house of Zaguè, was, it seems a just and peaceable prince.

Under the mediation of Abuna Tecla Haimanout, a treaty was made between him and Icon Amlac consisting of four articles, all very extraordinary in their kind.

The first was, that Naacueto Laab, prince of the house of Zaguè, should forthwith resign the kingdom of Abyffinia to Icon Amlac, reigning prince of the line of Solomon then in Shoa.

The second that a portion of lands in Lafta should be given to Naacuto Laab and his heirs in absolute property, irrevocably and irredeemably; that he should preserve, as marks of sovereignty, two silver kettle drums, or nagareets; that the points of the spears of his guard, the globes that surmounted his fendeck, (that is the pole upon which the colours are carried), should be silver, and that he should sit upon a gold stool, or chair, in form of that used by the Kings of Abyffinia; and that both
he

he and his descendents should be absolutely free from all homage, services, taxes, or public burdens for ever, and stiled Kings of Zaguè, or the Laa king.

The third article was, That one third of the kingdom should be appropriated and ceded absolutely to the Abuna himself, for the maintenance of his own state, and support of the clergy, convents, and churches in the kingdom; and this became afterwards an æra, or epoch, in Abyssinian history, called the æra of partition.

The fourth, and last article, provided, that no native Abyssinian could thereafter be chosen Abuna, and this even tho' he was ordained at, and sent from Cairo. In virtue of this treaty, concluded and solemnly sworn to, Icon Amlac took possession of his throne, and the other contracting parties of the provisions respective allotted them.

The part of the treaty that should appear most liable to be broken was that which erected a kingdom within a kingdom. However, it is one of the remarkable facts in the annals of this country, that the article between Icon Amlac and the house of Zaguè was observed for near 500 years; for it was made before the year 1300, and never was broken, but by the treacherous murder of the Zaguean prince by Allo Fafil in the unfortunate war of Begemder, in the reign of Joas 1768, the year before I arrived in Abyssinia; neither has any Abuna native of Abyssinia ever been known since that period. As for the exorbitant grant of one third of the kingdom to the Abuna, it has been in great measure

measure resumed, as we may naturally suppose, upon different pretences of misbehaviour, true or alleged by the king or his ministers, the first great invasion of it being in the subsequent reign of king Theodorus, who, far from losing popularity by this infraction, has been ever reckoned a model for sovereigns.

B O O K III.

ANNALS OF ABYSSINIA;

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL:

CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIANS, FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE LINE OF SOLOMON TO THE DEATH OF SOCINIOS, AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE ROMISH RELIGION.

I C O N A M L A C.

From 1268 to 1283.

Line of Solomon restored under this Prince—He continues the Royal Residence in Shoa—Tecla Haimanout dies—Reasons for the Fabrication of the supposed Nicene Canon.

ALTHOUGH the multiplicity of names assumed by the kings of Abyssinia, and the confusion occasioned by this custom, has more than once been complained of in the foregoing sheets, we have here a prince that is an exception to this practice, otherwise almost general. Icon Amlac is the only name by which we know this first prince of the race of Solomon, restored now fully to his dominions, after a long exile his family had suffered by the treason of Judith. The signification of his name is, "Let him be made our sovereign," and is apparently

rently that which he took upon his inauguration or accession to the throne ; and his name of baptism, and bye-name or popular name given him, are both therefore lost.

Although now restored to the complete possession of his ancient dominions, he was too wise all at once to leave his dutiful kingdom of Shoa and return to Tigré. He continued to make Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, his seat of the empire, and there reigned fifteen years.

In the 14th year of the reign of this prince, his great benefactor, Abuna Tecla Haimanout, founder of the Order of Monks of Debra Libanos, and restorer of the Royal family, died at that monastery in great reputation and very advanced age. He was the last Abyssinian ordained Abuna ; and this sufficiently shews the date of that canon I have already spoken of, falsely said to be a canon of the council of Nicea.

Though Le Grande and some others have pretended to be in doubt at what time, and for what reason this canon could have been made, I think the reason very plain, which fixes it to the time of Tecla Haimanout, as well as shews it to be a forgery of the church of Alexandria, no doubt with the council and advice of this great statesman Tecla Haimanout. Egypt was fallen under the dominion of the Saracens ; the Coptic patriarch, and all the Christians of the church of Alexandria, were their slaves or servants ; but the Abyssinians were free and independent, both in church and state, and a mortal hatred had followed the conquest from variety of causes, of which the persecution of the Christians in Egypt was not one of the least. As

it was probable that these reasons would increase daily, the consequence which promised inevitably to follow was, that the Abyssinians would not apply to Alexandria, or Cairo, for a metropolitan sent by the Mahometans, but would choose a head of their own, and so become independent altogether of the chair of St. Mark. As they were cut off from the rest of the world by seas and deserts almost inaccessible, as they wanted books, and were every day relaxing in discipline, total ignorance was likely to follow their separation from their primitive church, and this could not end but in a relapse into Paganism, or in their embracing the religion of Mahomet.

This prohibition of making any of their countrymen Abuna, secured them always a foreigner, and a man of foreign education and attachments, to fill the place of Abuna, and by this means assured the dependence of the Abyssinians upon the patriarch of Alexandria. This is what I judge probable, for I have already invincibly shewn, that it is impossible this canon could be one of the first general Council; and its being in Arabic, and conceived in very barbarous terms, sufficiently evinces that it was forged at this period.

I G B A S I O N.

From 1283 to 1312.

Quick Succession of Princes—Memoirs of these Reigns deficient.

TO Icon Amlac succeeded Igba Sion, and after him five other princes, his brothers, Bahar Segued, Tzenaf Segued, Jan Segued, Hafeb Araad, and Kedem Segued, all in five years. So quick a succession in so few years seems to mark very unsettled times. Whether it was a civil war among themselves that brought these reigns to so speedy a conclusion, or whether it was that the Moorish states in Adel had grown in power, and fought successfully against them, we do not know. One thing only we are certain of, that no molestation was offered by the late royal family of Lasta, who continued in peace, and firm in the observation of their treaty. I therefore am inclined to think, that a civil war among the brothers was the occasion of the quick succession of so many princes; and that in the time when the kingdom was weakened by this calamity, the states of Adel, grown rich and powerful, had improved the occasion, and seized upon all that territory from Azab to Melinda, and cut off the Abyssinians entirely from the sea-coast, and from an opportunity of trading directly with India from the ports situated upon the ocean. And my reason is, that, in a reign which speedily follows, we find the kingdom of Adel increased greatly in power,

er, and Moorish princes from Arabia established in little principalities, exactly corresponding with the southern limits of Abyssinia, and placed between them and the ocean; and we see, at the same time, a rancour and hatred firmly rooted in the breasts of both nations, one of the causes of which is constantly alleged by the Abyssinian princes to be, that the Moors of Adel were anciently their subjects and vassals, had withdrawn themselves from their allegiance, and owed their present independence to rebellion only.

To these princes succeeded Wedem Araad, their youngest brother, who reigned fifteen years, probably in peace, for in this state we find the kingdom in the days of his successor; but then it is such a peace that we see it only wanted any sort of provocation from one party to the other, for both to break out into very cruel, long, and bloody wars.



A D M A S I O N.

From 1312 to 1342.

Licentious beginning of this King's Reign—His rigorous Conduct with the Monks of Debra Libanos—His Mahometan Subjects rebel—Mara and Adel declare War—Are defeated in several Battles, and submit.

A M D A Sion succeeded his father, Wedem Araad, who was youngest brother of Icon Amlac, and came to the crown upon the death of his uncles. He is generally known by this his inauguration
tion

tion name; his Christian name was Guebra Mascal. His reign began with a scene as disgraceful to the name of Christian as it was new in the annals of Ethiopia, and which promised a character very different from what this prince preserved ever afterwards. He had for a time, it seems, privately loved a concubine of his father, but had now taken her to live with him publicly; and, not content with committing this sort of incest, he, in a very little time after, had seduced his two sisters.

Tegulat* (the capital of Shoa) was then the royal residence; and near it the monastery of Debra Libanos, founded by Tecla Haimanout restorer of the line of Solomon. To this monastery many men, eminent for learning and religion, had retired from the scenes of war that had desolated Palestine and Egypt. Among the number of these was one Honorius, a Monk of the first character for piety, who, since, has been canonized as a saint. Honorius thought it his duty first to admonish, and then publicly excommunicate the king for these crimes.

It should seem that patience was as little among this prince's virtues as chastity, as he immediately ordered Honorius to be apprehended, stripped naked, and severely whipped through every street of his capital. That same night the town took fire, and was entirely consumed, and the clergy lost no time to persuade the people, that it was the blood of Honorius that turned to fire whenever it had dropt upon the ground, and so had burnt the city. The king, perhaps better informed, thought otherwise of this, and supposed the burning of his capital

* The city of Wolves, or Hyænas.

pital was owing to the Monks themselves. He therefore banished those of Debra Libanos out of the province of Shoa. The mountain of Geshen had been chosen for the prison wherein to guard the princes of the male-line of the race of Solomon, after the massacre by Esther *, upon the rock Damo in Tigré.

Geshen is a very steep and high rock, in the kingdom of Amhara, adjoining to, and under the jurisdiction of Shoa. Hither the king sent Philip the Itchegué, chief of the monastery of Debra Libanos, and he scattered the rest through Dembea, Tigré, and Begemder, (whose inhabitants were mostly Pagans and Jews), where they greatly propagated the knowledge of the Christian religion.

This instance of severity in the king had the effect to make all ranks of people return to their duty; and all talk of Honorius and his miracles was dropt. The town was rebuilt speedily, more magnificently than ever, and Amda Sion found time to turn his thoughts to correct those abuses, to efface the unfavourable impression which they had made upon the minds of his people at home, and which, besides, had gained considerable ground abroad.

It has been before mentioned, and will be further inculcated in the course of this history as a fact, without the remembrance of which the military expeditions of Abyssinia cannot be well understood, that two opposite seasons prevail in countries separated by a line almost imperceptible; that
during

* She had several names, as I have before said, *Judith* in Tigré, and in Amhara *Esther*.

during our European winter months, that is, from October to March, the winter or rainy season prevails on the coast of the ocean and Red Sea, but that these rains do not fall in our summer, (the rainy season in Abyssinia), which was the reason why Amda Sion said to his mutinous troops, he would lead them to Adel or Auffa, where it did not rain, as we shall presently observe.

The different nations that dwell along the coast, both of the Red Sea and of the ocean, live in fixed huts or houses. We shall begin at the northmost, or nearest Atbara. The first is Ageeg, so named from a small island on the coast, opposite to the mountains of the Habab, Agag, or Agaazi, the principal district of the noble or governing Shepherds, as is before fully explained, different in colour and hair from the Shepherds of the Thebaid living to the northward. Then follow the different tribes of these, Tora, Shiho, Taltal, Azimo, and Azabo, where the Red Sea turns eastward, towards the Straits, all woolly-headed, the primitive carriers of Saba, and the perfume and gold country. Then various nations inhabit along the ocean, all native blacks, remnants of the Cushite Troglodyte, but who do not change their habitations with the seasons, but live within land in caves, and some of them now in houses.

In Adel and Auffa the inhabitants are tawny, and not black, and have long hair; they are called Gibbertis, which some French writers of voyages into this country say, mean Slaves, from Guebra, the Abyssinian word for slave or servant. But as it would be very particular that a nation like these,
so

so rich and so powerful, who have made themselves independent of their ancient masters the Abyssinians, have wrested so many provinces from them, and, from the difference of their faith, hold them in such utter contempt, should nevertheless be content to call themselves their slaves, so nothing is more true, than that this name of Gibberti has a very different import. Jabber, in Arabic, the word from which it is derived, signifies the *faith*, or the *true faith*; and Gibberti consequently means the *faithful*, or the *orthodox*, by which name of *honour* these Moors, inhabiting the low country of Abyssinia, call each other, as being constant in their faith amidst Christians with whom they are at perpetual war.

There is no current coin in Abyssinia. Gold is paid by weight; all the revenues are chiefly paid in kind, viz. oxen, sheep, and honey, which are the greatest necessaries of life. As for luxuries, they are obtained by a barter of gold, myrrh, coffee, elephants teeth, and a variety of other articles which are carried over to Arabia; and in exchange for these is brought back whatever is commissioned.

Every great man in Abyssinia has one of these Gibbertis for his factor. The king has many, who are commonly the shrewdest and most intelligent of their profession. These were the first inhabitants of Abyssinia, whom commerce connected with the Arabians on the other side of the Straits of Babel-mandeb, with whom they intermarry, or with one another, which preserves their colour and features, resembling both the Abyssinians and Arabians. In Arabia, they are under the protection of some of their own countrymen, who being sold when young

as slaves, are brought up in the Mahometan religion, and enjoy all the principal posts under the Sherriffe of Mecca and the Arabian princes. These are the people who at particular times have appeared in Europe, and who have been straightway taken for, and treated as Ambassadors.

More southward and westward are the kingdoms of Mara, Worgla, and Pagoma, small principalities of fixed habitations by the sea, at times free, at others dependent upon Adel; and, to the south of these, in the same flat country, is Hadea, whose capital is Harar, and governed by a prince, who is a Gibberti likewise; and who, by marrying a Sherriffe, or female descendant of Mahomet, is now reckoned a Sherriffe or noble of Mahomet's family, distinguished by his wearing habits, for the most part green, and above all a grass-green turban, a mark of hatred to Christianity.

The Gibbertis, then, are the princes and merchants of this country, converted to the Mahometan faith soon after the death of Mahomet, when the Baharnagash (as we have already stated) revolted from the empire of the Abyffinians, in whose hands all the riches of the country are centered. The black inhabitants are only their subjects, hewers of wood and drawers of water, who serve them in their families at home, take care of their camels when employed in caravans abroad, and who make the principal part of their forces in the field.

But there are other inhabitants still besides these Gibbertis and native blacks, whom we must not confound with the indigenious of this country, how much soever they may resemble them. The first of these

these are by the Portuguese historians called *Moors*, who are merchants from the west of Africa. Many of these, expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella, fixed their residence here, and were afterwards joined by others of their Moorish brethren, either exiles from Spain, or inhabitants of Morocco, whom the desire of commerce induced first to settle in Arabia, till the great oppressions that followed the conquest of Egypt and Arabia, under Selim and Soliman, interrupted their trade, and scattered them here along the coast. These are the Moors that Vafques de Gama* met at Mombaza, Magadoxa, and Melinda; at all places, but the last of which, they endeavoured to betray him. These also were the Moors that he found in India, having no profession but trade, in every species of which they excelled,

The fourth sort are Arabian merchants, who come over occasionally to recover their debts, and renew correspondences with the merchants of this country. These are the richest of all, and are the bankers of the Gibbertis, who furnish them funds and merchandise, with which they carry on a most lucrative and extensive trade into the heart of Africa, through all the mountains of Abyssinia to the western sea, and through countries which are inaccessible to camels, where the ass, the mule, and, in some places, oxen, are the only beasts used in carriage.

There is a fifth sort, almost below notice, unless it is for the mischief they have constantly done
their

* *Conquetes de Portugais par Laftau*, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 90.
Id. *ibid.* p. 144.

their country; they are the Abyssinian apostates from Christianity, the most inveterate enemies it has, and who are employed chiefly as soldiers. While in that country they are not much esteemed, though, when transported to India, they have constantly turned out men of confidence, and trust, and the best troops those eastern nations have.

There is a sixth, still less in number than even these, and not known on this Continent till a few years before. These were the Turks who came from Greece and Syria, and who were under Selim, and Soliman his son, the instruments of the conquest of Egypt and Arabia; small garrisons of whom were every where left by the Turks in all the fortresses and considerable towns they conquered. They are an hereditary kind of militia, who, marrying each others daughters, or with the women of the country, continue from father to son to receive from Constantinople the same pay their forefathers had from Selim. These, though degenerate in figure and manners into an exact resemblance to the natives of the countries in which they since lived, do still continue to maintain their superiority by a constant skill and attention to fire-arms, which were, at the time of their first appearance here, little known or in use among either Abyssinians or Arabians, and the means of first establishing this preference.

It has been already observed, that the Mahometan Moors and Arabs possessed all the low country on the Indian Ocean, and opposite to Arabia Felix; and being, by their religion, obliged to go in pilgrimage to Mecca, as also by their sole profession which was trade, they became, by consequence, the

the only carriers and directors of the commerce of Abyssinia. All the country to the east and north of Shoa was possessed and commanded chiefly by Mahometan merchants appointed by the king; and they had established a variety of marts or fairs from Ifat, all the way as far as Adel.

Adel and Mara were two of the most powerful kingdoms which lie on the Indian Ocean; and, being constantly supported by soldiers from Arabia, were the first to withdraw themselves from obedience to the king of Abyssinia, and seldom paid their tribute unless when the prince came to raise it there with an army. Ifat, Fatigar, and Dawaro, were indeed originally Christian provinces; but, in weak reigns, having been ceded to Moorish governors for sums of money, they, by degrees, renounced both their religion and allegiance.

From what has been observed, the reader will conceive, that where it is said the king, from his capital in Shoa, marched down into Dawaro, Hadea, or Adel, that he then descended from the highest mountains down to the flat country on the level with the sea. That this country, from Hadea to Dawaro, having been the seat of war for ages, was, partly by the soldier for the use of the camp, partly by the husbandman for the necessaries of life, cleared of wood, where the water stood constantly in pools throughout the year; and, being all composed of fat black earth, which the torrents bring down from the rainy country of Abyssinia, was sown with millet and different kinds of grain in the driest ground, while, nearer the mountains, they pastured numerous herds of cattle. Notwithstanding,

ing, however, the country was possessed of these advantages, the climate was intensely hot, feverish, and unhealthy, and, for the most part, from these circumstances, fatal to strangers, and hated by the Abyssinians.

Again, when it is said that the king had marched to Samhar, it is meant that he had passed this fruitful country, and is come to that part of the zone, or belt, (nearest the sea) composed of gravel; which, though it enjoys neither the water nor the fruitfulness of the black earth, is in a great measure free from its attendant diseases, and here the cities and towns are placed, while the crop, oxen, and cattle, are in the cultivated part near the mountains, which in the language of the country is called *Mazaga*, signifying *black mould*.

Lastly, when he hears the army murmuring at being kept during the rainy season in the Kolla below, he is to remember, that all was cool, pleasant, and safe in Upper Abyssinia. The soldiers, therefore, languished for the enjoyment of their own families, without any other occupation but merriment, festivity, and every species of gratification that wine, and the free and uncontrolled society of the female-sex, could produce.

Having now sufficiently explained and described the various names and inhabitants, the situation, soil, and climate of those provinces about to be the theatre of the war, I shall proceed to declare the occasion of it, which was nothing more than the fruit of those prejudices which, I have already said, the loose behaviour of the king in the beginning of his reign had produced among his neighbours,
and

and the calamities which had enfeebled the kingdom in the preceding reigns.

It happened that one of those Moorish factors, whom I have already described, having in charge the commercial interests of the king, had been assassinated and robbed in the province of Ifat, when the King was busied with Honorius and his Monks. Without complaining or expostulating, he suddenly assembled his troops, having ordered them to rendezvous at Shugura upon the frontiers, and, to shew his impatience for revenge, with seven * horsemen he fell upon the nearest Mahometan settlements, who were perfectly secure, and put all he found to the sword without exception. Then placing himself at the head of his army, he marched, by a long day's journey, straight to Ifat, burning Hungura, Jadaï, Kubat, Fadise, Calife, and Argai, towns that lye in the way, full of all sorts of valuable merchandise, and, finding no where a force assembled to oppose him, he divided his army into small detachments, sending them different ways with orders to lay the whole countries, where they came, waste with fire and sword, while he himself remained in the camp to guard the spoil, the women, and the baggage.

The Moors, astonished at this torrent of desolation, which so suddenly had broken out under a prince whom they had considered as immersed in pleasure, flew all to arms; and being informed that the king was alone, and scarcely had soldiers
to

* It has been imagined that this number should be increased to seventy, but I have followed the text; there would be little difference in the rashness of the action.

to guard his camp, they assembled in numbers under the command of Hak-eddin, governor of Ifat, who had before plundered and murdered the king's servant. They then determined to attack Amda Sion early in the morning, but luckily two of his detachments had returned to the camp to his assistance, and joined him the very night before.

It was scarcely day when the Moors presented themselves; but, far from surprising the Abyssinians buried in sleep, they found the king with his army ranged in battle, who, without giving them time to recover from their surprise, attacked them in person with great fury; and singling out Derdar, brother to Hak-eddin, animating his men before the ranks, he struck him so violently with his lance that he fell dead among his horse's feet, in the fight of both armies; whilst the Abyssinian troops pressing every where briskly forward, the Moors took to flight, and were pursued with great slaughter into the woods and fastnesses.

After this victory, the king ordered his troops to build huts for themselves, at least such as could not find houses ready built. He ordered, likewise, a great tract of land contiguous to be plowed and sown, meaning to intimate, that his intention was to stay there with his army all the rainy season.

The Mahometans, from this measure, if it should be carried into execution, saw nothing but total extirpation before their eyes; they, therefore, with one consent, submitted to the tribute imposed upon them; and the king having removed Hak-eddin, placed his brother Saber-eddin in his stead, and the
rainy

rainy season being now begun, dismissed his army, and returned to Tegulat in Shoa.

Though the personal gallantry of the king was a quality sufficient of itself to make him a favourite of the soldiers, his liberality was not less; all the plunder got by his troops in the field was faithfully divided among those who had fought for him; nor did he ever pretend to a share himself, unless on occasions when he was engaged in person, and then he shared upon an equal footing with his principal officers.

When returned to the capital, he shewed the same disinterestedness and generosity which he had done in the field, and he distributed all he had won for his share among the great men, whom the necessary duties of government had obliged to remain at home, as also among the poor, and priests for the maintenance of churches; and, as well by this, as by his zeal and activity against the enemies of Christianity, he became the greatest favourite of all ranks of the clergy, notwithstanding the unpromising appearances at the beginning of his reign.

The rainy season in Abyssinia generally puts an end to the active part of war, as every one retires then to towns and villages to screen themselves from the inclemency of the climate, deluged now with daily rain. The soldier, the husbandman, and, above all, the women, dedicate this season to continued festivity and riot. These villages and towns are always placed upon the highest mountains. The valleys that intervene are soon divided by large and rapid torrents. Every hollow foot-path becomes a stream, and the valleys between

the hills become so miry as not to bear horse; and the waters, both deep and violent, are too apt to shift their direction to suffer any one on foot to pass safely. All this season, and this alone, people sleep in their houses in safety; their lances and shields are hung up on the sides of their hall, and their saddles and bridles taken off their horses; for in Abyssinia, at other times, the horses are always bridled, and are accustomed to eat and drink with this incumbrance. It is not, indeed, the same sort of bridle they use in the field, but a small bit of iron like our hunting-bridles, on purpose merely to preserve them in this habit. The court, and the principal officers of government, retire to the capital, and there administer justice, make alliances, and prepare the necessary funds and armaments, which the present exigencies of the state require on the return of fair weather.

Amda Sion was no sooner returned to Tegulat, than the Moors again entered into a conspiracy against him. The principal were Amano king of Hadea, Saber-eddin, whom the king had made governor of Fatigar, and privately, without any open declaration, Gimmel-eddin governor in Dawaro. But this conspiracy, could not be hid from a prince of Amda Sion's vigilance and penetration. He concealed, however, any knowledge of the matter, lest it should urge the Moors to commence hostilities too early. He continued, therefore, with diligence, and without ostentation of any particular design, to make the ordinary preparations to take the field on the approaching season. This, however, did not impose upon the enemy. Whether from intelligence,

ligence, or impatience of being longer inactive, Saber-eddin began the first hostilities, by surprizing some Christian villages, and plundering and setting fire to the churches before the rains had yet entirely ceased.

Those that have written accounts of Abyssinia seem to agree in extolling the people of that country for giving no belief to the existence or reality of witchcraft or forcery. Why they have fixed on this particular nation is hard to determine. But, as for me, I have no doubt in asserting, that there is not a barbarous or ignorant people that I ever knew of which this can be truly said; but certainly it never was less true than when said of Abyssinians. There is scarce a monk in any lonely monastery, (such as those in the hot and unwholesome valley of Waldubba), not a hermit of the many upon the mountains, not an old priest who has lived any time sequestered from society, that does not pretend to possess charms offensive and defensive, and several methods by which he can, at will, look into futurity. The Moors are all, to a man, persuaded of this: their arms and necks are loaded with amulets against witchcraft. Their women are believed to have all the mischievous powers of fascination; and both sexes a hundred secrets of divination. The Falasha are addicted to this in still a greater degree, if possible. It is always believed by every individual Abyssinian, that the number of hyænas the smell of carrion brings into the city of Gondar every night, are the Falasha from the neighbouring mountains, transformed by the effect and for the purposes of enchantment. Even the Galla, a barbarous

barous and stranger nation, hostile to the Abyssinians, and differing in language and religion, still agree with them in a hearty belief of the possibility of practising witchcraft, so as to occasion sickness and death at a very great distance, to blast the harvests, poison the waters, and render people incapable of propagating their species.

Amano, king of Hadea, had one of these conjurers, who, by his knowledge of futurity, was famous among all the Mahometans of the low country. The king of Hadea himself had gone no further than to determine to rebel; but whether he was to go up to fight with Amda Sion in Shoa, or whether greater success would attend his expecting him in Hadea, this was thought a doubt wholly within the province of the conjurer, who assured Amano, his master, that if he did remain below, and wait for Amda Sion in Hadea, that prince would come down to him and in one battle lose his kingdom and his life.

The king, whose principal view was to prevent the conjunction of the confederates, and, if possible, to fight them separately, did not stay till his whole army was assembled, but, as soon as he got together a body of troops sufficient to make head against any one of the rebels, he sent that body immediately on the service it was destined for, in order to disappoint the general combination.

A large number of horse and foot (whose post was in the van of the royal army when the king marched at the head of it) was the first ready, and, without delay, was sent against Amano into Hadea, under the command of the general of the cavalry.

This

This officer executed the service on which he was sent with the greatest diligence possible, having the best horses, and strongest and most active men in the army; by long marches, he came upon the king of Hadea, surprised him before his troops were all assembled, gave him an entire defeat, and made him prisoner. However ill the conjurer had provided for the king's safety, he seems to have been more attentive to his own; great search was made for him by order of Amda Sion, but he was not to be found, having very early, upon the first fight of the king's troops, fled and hid himself in Ifat.

The next detachment was sent against Saber-eddin in Fatigar. The governor of Amhara commanded this, with orders to lay the whole country waste, and by all means provoke Saber-eddin to risk a battle, either before or after the junction of the troops which were to march thither from Hadea. But when the king was thus busy with the Moors, news were brought him that the Falasha had rebelled, and were in arms, in very great numbers. The king ordered Tzaga Christos, governor of Begemder, to assemble his troops with those of Gondar, Sacalta, and Damot, and march against these rebels before they had time to ruin the country; and having thus made provision against all his enemies, Amda Sion proceeded with the remainder of his army to Dawaro.

Hydar was governor in this province for the king, who, though he shewed outwardly every appearance of duty and fidelity, was, notwithstanding, deep in the conspiracy with Saber-eddin, and had close correspondence with the king of Adel, whose

whose capital, Auffa, was not at a great distance from him.

The king kept his Easter at Gaza, immediately upon the verge of the desert; and, being willing to accustom his troops to action and hardship, he left his tents and baggage behind with the army; and secretly taking with him but twenty-six horsemen, he made an incursion upon Samhar, destroying all before him, and staying all night, tho' he had no provisions, in the middle of his enemies, without so much as lying down to sleep, slacking his belt, or taking off any part of his armour.

The king was no sooner gone than the army missed him, and was all in the greatest uproar. But having finished his expedition, he joined them in the morning, and encamped again with them. On his arrival, he found waiting for him a messenger from Tzaga Christos, with accounts that he had fought successfully with the Falasha, entirely defeated them, slain many, and forced the rest to hide themselves in their inaccessible mountains. Immediately after this intelligence, Tzaga Christos, with his victorious army, joined the king also.

These good tidings were followed by others equally prosperous from Hadea and Fatigar. They were, that the king's army in those parts had forced Saber-eddin to a battle, and beaten him, taken and plundered his house, and brought his wife and children prisoners; and that the troops had found that country full of merchandise and riches of all kinds; that they were already laden and incumbered with the quantity to such a degree, that they were all speaking of disbanding and retiring to their houses
with

with riches sufficient for the rest of their lives, although a great part of the country remained as yet untouched, and, therefore, it was requested of the king in all diligence to enter it on his side also, and march southward till both armies met. Immediately upon this message, the king, having refreshed his troops, and informed them of the good prospects that were before them, decamped with his whole army, and entered the province of Ifat.

When Saber-eddin saw the king's forces were joined, that he had no allies, and that it was, in the situation of his army, equally dangerous to stay or to fly, he took a resolution of submitting himself to the king's mercy; but, first, he endeavoured to soften his anger, and obtain some assurances through the mediation of the queen. The king, however, having publicly reprov'd the queen for offering to intermeddle in such matters, and growing more violent and inflexible upon this application, there remained no alternative but that of surrendering himself at discretion. Whereupon Saber-eddin threw himself at the king's feet. The soldiers and by-standers, far from being moved at such a sight, with one voice earnestly besought the king, that the murderer of so many priests, and the profaner and destroyer of so many Christian churches, should instantly meet the death his crimes had merited. The king, however, whose mercy seems to have been equal to his bravery, after having reprov'd him with great asperity, and upbraided him with his cruelty, presumption, and ingratitude, ordered him only to be put in irons, and committed to a close prison. At the same time, he
displaced

displaced Hydar, governor of the province of Darwaro, of whose treason he had been long informed; and he invested Gimmel-eddin, Saber-eddin's brother, with the government of the Mahometan provinces, who, as he pretended, had not been present at the beginning of the war, but had preserved his allegiance to the king, and dissuaded his brother from the rebellion.

While the king was thus settling the government of the rebellious provinces, he received intelligence that the kings of Adel and Mara had resolved to march after him into Shoa when he returned, and give him battle.

At this time the king was encamped on the river Hawash, at the head of the whole army, now united. This news of the hostile intentions of the kings of Adel and Mara, so exasperated him, that he determined to enlarge his scheme of vengeance beyond the limits he had first prescribed to it. With this view, he called the principal officers of his army together, while he himself stood upon an eminence, the foldiers surrounding him on all sides. Near him, on the same eminence, was a monk, noted for his holiness, in the habit in which he celebrated divine service. The king, in a long speech pronounced with unusual vehemence, described the many offences committed against him by the Mahometan states on the coast. The ringleaders of these commotions, he declared, were the kings of Adel and Mara. He enumerated various instances of cruelty, of murder, and sacrilege, of which they had been guilty; the number of priests that they had slain, the churches that they had burned, and the

the Christian women and children that they had carried into slavery, which was now become a commerce, and a great motive of war. They, and they only, had stirred up his Mahometan subjects to infect the frontiers both in peace and war. He said, that considering the immense booty which had been taken, it might seem that avarice was the motive of his being now in arms, but this, for his own part, he totally disclaimed. He neither had nor would apply the smallest portion of the plunder to his own use, but considered it as unlawful, as being purchased with the blood and liberty of his subjects and brethren, the meanest of whom he valued more than the blood and riches of all the infidels in Adel. He, therefore, called them together to be witnesses that he dedicated himself a soldier to Jesus Christ; and he did now swear upon the holy eucharist, that, though but twenty of his army should join with him, he would not turn his back upon Adel or Mara, till he had either forced them to tribute and submission, or extirpated them, and annihilated their religion.

He then entered the tent-door, and took the sacrament from the hands of the monk, in presence of the whole army. All the principal officers did the same, and every individual of the army, with repeated shouts, declared, that they acceded to, and were bound by, the oath the king then had made. A violent fury spread in this instant through the whole army; they considered that part of the king's speech as a reproach, which mentioned the spoils they had taken to have been bought by the blood of Christians, their brethren. Every hand laid hold
of

of a torch, and, whether the plunder was his own or his fellow-soldiers, each man set fire, without interruption, to the merchandise that was next him. The whole riches of Ifat and Hadea, Fatigar and Dawaro, were consumed in an instant by these fanatics, who, satisfied now that they were purged from the impurity which the king had attributed to their plunder, returned poor to their standards, but convinced in their own conscience of having now, by their sacrament and expiation, become the soldiers of Christ, they thirsted no longer after any thing but the blood of the inhabitants of Adel and Maria.

Soon after, Amda Sion heard that the Moors had attacked his army in Ifat two several nights, and that his troops had suffered greatly, and with difficulty been able to maintain themselves in their camp. The king was then upon his march when he heard these disagreeable news; he hastened, therefore, immediately to their relief, and encamped at night in an advantageous post, short of his main army, with a view of taking advantage of this situation, if the Moors, as he expected, renewed their attack that night for the third time.

The Abyssinians, to a man, are fearful of the night, unwilling to travel, and, above all, to fight in that season, when they imagine the world is in possession of certain genii, averse to intercourse with men, and very vindictive, if even by accident they are ruffled or put out of their way by their interference. This, indeed, is carried to so great a height, that no man will venture to throw water out of a basin upon the ground, for fear that, in
ever

ever so small a space the water should have to fall, the dignity of some elf, or fairy, might be violated. The Moors have none of these apprehensions, and are accustomed in the way of trade to travel at all hours, sometimes from necessity, but often from choice, to avoid the heat. They laugh, moreover, at the superstitions of the Abyssinians, and not unfrequently avail themselves of them. A verse of the Koran, sewed up in leather, and tied round their neck or their arms, secures them from all these incorporeal enemies; and, from this known advantage, if other circumstances are favourable, they never fail to fight the Abyssinians at or before the dawn of the morning, for in this country there is no twilight.

The Moors did not, in this instance, disappoint the king's expectation; as they, with all possible secrecy, marched to the attack of the camp, while the king, having refreshed his troops, put himself in motion to intercept them; and they were now arrived, and engaged in several places with very great vigour. The camp was in apparent danger, though vigorously defended. At this moment the king, with his fresh troops, fell violently upon their rear; and, it being known to the Moors that this was the king, they withdrew their army with all possible speed, carrying with them a very considerable booty.

The success which had followed these night expeditions, above all, the small loss that had attended the pursuit, even after they were defeated, from the perfect knowledge they had of the country, inspired them with a resolution to avoid pitched battles, but

to distress and harass the king's army every night. They accordingly brought their camp nearer than usual to the king's quarters. This began to be felt by the army, which was prevented from foraging at a great distance ; but provisions could not be dispensed with. The king, therefore, detached a large body of horse and foot that had not been engaged or fatigued. The greatest part of the foot he ordered to return with the cattle they should have taken, but the horse, with each a foot-soldier behind him, he directed to take post in a wood near a pool of water, where the Moorish troops, after an assault in the night, retired, and took refreshments and sleep by the time the sun began to be hot. The Moors again appeared in the night, attacked the camp in several places, and alarmed the whole army ; but, by the bravery and vigour of the king, who every where animated his troops by his own example, they were obliged to retreat a little before morning, more fatigued, and more roughly handled, than they had hitherto been in any such expedition.

The king, as if equally tired, followed them no further than the precincts of his camp ; and the Moors, scarcely comforted by this forbearance after so great a loss, retreated to receive succour of fresh troops as usual, and enjoy their repose in the neighbourhood of shade and water. They had, however, scarce thrown aside their arms, disposed of their wounded in proper places, and begun to assuage their thirst after the toils of the assault, when the Abyssinian horse, breaking through the covert, came swiftly upon them, unable either to fight or

to fly, and the whole body of them was cut to pieces without one man escaping.

The king, upon return of his troops, began to consider, and, by combining various circumstances in his mind, to suspect strongly, that, from the Moors attacking him, as they had for some time lately done, always in the most unfavourable circumstances, there must be some intelligence between his camp and that of the enemy. Upon examining more particularly into the grounds of this suspicion, three men of Harar (who had long attended the army as spies) were discovered, and being convicted, were carried out, and their heads cut off at the entrance of the camp; after which the king, who now found himself without an enemy in these parts, struck his tents, and returned to Gaza in Dawaro.

This movement of Amda Sion's had more the appearance of opening a campaign than the closing of one, and occasioned great discontent among the soldiers, who had done their business, and were without an enemy, just at that time that the rains fall so heavy, and the country becomes so unwholesome as to make it unadvisable to keep the field. They, therefore, remonstrated by their officers to the king, that they must return to their houses for the several months of winter which were to follow; and that, after the fatigues, dangers, and hardships they had undergone for so many months, to persist in staying longer at such a season in this country was equal to the condemning them to death.

Gimmel-eddin, moreover, the new-appointed governor, insisted with Amda Sion, that he was able
enough

enough himself to keep all the tributary provinces in peace, and true allegiance to the king; but if, on the contrary, the king chose to eat them up with a large army living constantly among them, as well as upon every pretence laying them waste with the sword in the manner he was now doing, he could not be answerable for, nor did he believe they would be able to pay him, the tribute he expected from them. But the king, who saw the motives both of his officers and of the Moorish governor, continued firm in his resolutions. He sharply reprov'd both Gimmel-eddin and his army for their want of discipline, and desire of idleness, and ordered the officers to acquaint their men, that, if they were afraid of rains, he would carry them to *Adel*, where there were *none*; that, for his part, he made a resolution which he would keep most steadily, never to leave his camp and the field while there was one village in his own dominions that did not acknowledge him for its sovereign.

Accordingly on the 13th day of June 1316, immediately after this declaration, he struck his tents, and marched into Sambar, to disappoint, if possible, the confederacy that some of the principal Moorish states had entered into against him, which were agreed, one by one, to harass his camp by night, and, after having obliged him to retreat to Shoa in disorder, to give him battle there before he had time to refresh his troops. The authors of this conspiracy were seven in number, Adel Mara, Tico, Agwama, Bakla*, Murgar, and Gabula, and they had

* A tribe of the Shepherds; all the rest, but the two first, unknown in Abyssinia at this day.

had already collected a considerable army. The king, who saw they persisted in their nightly attacks, rode out, thinly accompanied, to choose a post for an encampment that was to give him the greatest advantage over his enemy; and, whilst thus occupied, he was suddenly surrounded by a body of troops of Adel lying in Ambush for him. A soldier (in appearance an Abyssinian) came so close to the king as to strike him with his sword on the back with such violence that it cut his belt in two, and, having wounded him thro' his armour, was ready to repeat the blow, when the king pierced him through the forehead with his lance, upon which his party fled.

But the Moors, for five successive nights, did not fail in their attempts upon his camp, which wearied and greatly contributed to discontent his men; and the more so, because the enemy declined coming to any general engagement, though the king frequently offered it to them. Amda Sion, therefore, decamped the 28th of June, and, leaving this disadvantageous station, advanced a day's march nearer Mara, pointing, as it were, to the very center of that kingdom. But here, again, he was stopt by the discontent of his soldiers, who absolutely refused to go farther or spend the whole season in arms, in this inclement climate, while the rest of his subjects, in full enjoyment of health and plenty, were rioting at home.

This disposition of his army was no sooner known to the king than he called the principal officers of them together, and, planting himself on a rising ground, he began to harangue his soldiers with so much eloquence and force of reasoning, that they who before

fore

fore had only learned to admire their king as a soldier, were obliged to confess that, as an orator, he as much excelled every man in his state, as he did the lowest man of his kingdom in dignity. He put his soldiers in mind, “ that this was not a common expedition, like those of his predecessors, “ marching through the country for the purpose of “ levying their revenue; that the intention of the “ present war was to avenge the blood of so many “ innocent Christians slain in security and full peace, “ from no provocation but hatred of their religion : “ that they were instruments in the hand of God “ to revenge the death of so many priests and “ monks who had been wantonly offered as sacrifices upon their own altars : that they were not “ a common army, but one confederated upon “ oath, having sworn upon the sacrament, at the “ passage of the river Hawash, that they would not “ return into Abyssinia till they had beat down and “ ruined the strength of the Mahometans in those “ kingdoms; so that now, when every thing had “ succeeded to their wishes, when every Mahometan army had been defeated as soon as it presented “ itself, and the whole country lay open to the “ chastisements they pleased to inflict, to talk of a “ retreat or forbearance was to make a mockery at “ once of their oath, and the motive of their expedition. He shewed, by invincible reasonings, “ the great hardships and danger that would attend “ his retreat through a country already wasted and “ unable to maintain his army; what an alarm it “ would occasion in Shoa, to find him returning “ with an enemy at his heels, following him to his

“ very

“ very capital; that such, however, must be the
 “ consequence; for it was plain, that, though the
 “ enemy declined fighting, yet there was no possi-
 “ bility of hindering them from following him so
 “ near as to give his retreat every appearance of
 “ flight, and to bring an expedition, begun with
 “ success, to an ignominious and a fatal end.

“ He upbraided them with his own example, that
 “ early their prophets had foretold he was a prince
 “ of luxury and ease, which, in the main he did
 “ not deny, but confessed that he was so; and that
 “ they all should have an attachment to their plea-
 “ sures and enjoyments, he thought but reasonable.
 “ He desired, however, in this, they would do as
 “ much as he did, and only suspend their love of
 “ ease and rest as long as their duty to God, to
 “ their country, and their murdered brethren,
 “ required; for, till these duties were fulfilled, ease
 “ and enjoyment to a Christian, and especially to
 “ them bound by oath to accomplish a certain pur-
 “ pose, was, in his eyes, little short of apostacy.”

A loud acclamation now followed from the whole army. They declared again, that they renewed their sacrament taken at the passage of the Hawash, that they were Christ's soldiers, and would follow their sovereign unto death.

Though the great personal merit of the king, and the grace, force, and dignity with which he spoke, had, of themselves, produced a very sudden change in the mind of the soldiers, yet, to the increase of this good disposition it had very much contributed, that a monk, of great holiness and austerity of manners, living in a cell on the point of a steep rock,

had come down from Shoa to the camp, declaring that he had found it written in the Revelation of St. John, that this year the religion of Mahomet was to be utterly extirpated throughout the world. Full of this idea, on the feast of Ras Werk, in the month of July, the army passed the Yafs, a large river of the kingdom of Mara, and encamped there. The troops were alarmed, the night after their arrival, by a piece of intelligence which proved a falsehood.

A woman, whose father had been a Christian, said, that she had very lately left the Moorish camp; that the enemy were at no great distance, and only waited a night of storm and rain to make a general attack upon the king's army; and the clouds threatening then a night of foul weather, it was not doubted but the engagement was thereupon immediately to follow. It blew, then so violent a storm, that the king's tent, and most of those in camp, were thrown down, and the soldiers were in very great confusion, imagining, every moment the Moors ready to fall on them. But whether the story was a falsehood, or the storm too great for the Moors to venture out, nothing happened that night, nor, indeed, during their stay in that station.

At this time a number of priests and others came out of curiosity to see their king making conquests of provinces and people till then unknown to them even by name; several large detachments of fresh troops from Abyffinia also arrived, and joined the army. Upon this, Amda Sion advanced a day's journey farther into Mara, and took a strong post, resolving to maintain himself there, and, by detachments,

ments, lay the whole country desolate. This place is called *Daffi*. There was neither river, however, nor spring near it, but only water procured by digging in the sand, being what comes down from the sides of the mountains in the rainy season, and, having filtered through the whole loose earth, has reached the sand and gravel, where it stagnates, or finds slowly its level to the sea. Here the king was taken dangerously ill with the fever of the Kolla.

The altercations between Amda Sion and his soldiers, and the resolutions taken in consequence of these, were faithfully carried to the king of Adel. The march of the king forward at such a season of the year, the slow pace with which he advanced towards the very heart of the country, the care he took of providing all necessaries for his army, and his reinforcing it at such a season, all shewed this was no partial, sudden incursion, but that it was meant as a decisive blow, fatal to the independence of these petty sovereigns and states. To this it may be added, that Gimmel-eddin, whom the king had released from prison, and set over the Moorish provinces of Abyssinia, conveyed to them, in the most direct manner, that such were the king's purposes. He told them, moreover, this march into their country was not either to increase their tribute, or for the sake of plunder, or to force them to be his subjects; that Amda Sion's main design was against their religion, which he and his soldiers had vowed they were to destroy; that it was not their time to think of peace or tribute upon any terms; for, were they even to sell their wives and children, the price would not be accepted, unless

they forsook the religion of their fathers, and embraced Christianity. He further added, that *his* resolution was already taken, that he would die firm in the faith, a good Mahometan, as he had lived; not tamely, however, but in the middle of his enemies; and that he was now making every sort of preparation to resist to the latest breath.

No sooner was this intelligence from Gimmel-eddin published, than a kind of frenzy seized the people of Adel; they ran tumultuously to arms, and, with shrieks and adjurations, demanded to be led immediately against the Abyssinians, for they no longer desired to live upon such terms.

There was among the leading men of the Moors one Saleh, chief of a small district called Cassi, by birth a Sherriffe, *i. e.* one of the race of Mahomet, and who, to the nobility of his birth, joined the holiness of his character. He was *Imam*, as it is called, or *high priest* of the Moors, and, for both these reasons, held in the greatest estimation among them. This man undertook, by his personal influence, to unite all the Moorish states in a common league. For it is to be observed, that, though religion was very powerful in uniting these Moors against the Christians, yet the love of gain, and jealousies of commerce, perpetually kept a party alive that favoured the king for their own interest, in the very heart of the Moorish confederacies and councils. To overcome this was the object of Saleh, and he succeeded beyond expectation, as sixteen kings brought 40,000 men into the field under their several leaders; but the chief command was given to the king of Adel.

I must put the reader in mind that I am translating an Abyssinian historian. These, then, whom this chronicle styles Kings, must be considered as being only hereditary and independent chiefs, not tributary to Abyssinia. Their names are Adel, Mara, Bakla, Haggara, Fadise, Gadai, Nagal, Zuba, Harlar, Hobal, Hangila, Tarskish, Ain, Ilbiro, Zeyla, and Estè. Now, when we consider, that these sixteen kings brought only 40,000 men, and that they were commanded under these sixteen by 2712 leaders, or governors or districts, all which are set down by name, we must have a very contemptible opinion of the extent and populousness of these newly-erected kingdoms.

It appears to me unnecessary to repeat, after my historian, the names of these villages, which probably do not now exist, and are, perhaps, utterly unknown. I shall only observe in passing, that here we find Tarshis, or Tarskish, a kingdom on the coast of the ocean, directly in the way to Sofala; another strong presumption that Sofala and Ophir were the same, and that this is Tarskish where Solomon's fleet stopt when going to Ophir.

Amda Sion's fever hindering him to march forward, and being unwilling to risk a battle where he was not able himself to command, he continued close in his strong camp at Dassi, waiting his recovery; but, in the mean time, he made considerable detachments on all sides to lay the country waste around him, till he should be able to advance farther into it.

Of all the royal army, as it stood upon the establishment, the king had only with him the troops
from

from the provinces of Amhara, Shoa, Gojam, and Damot, and these were what composed the rear, when the whole, called the royal army, was assembled; all his troops were regularly paid, well armed, and cloathed, and were not only provided with every necessary, but were become exceedingly rich, and, therefore, the more careless of discipline, and difficult to manage, on account of the repeated conquests that had followed one another ever since the king had crossed the river Hawash, and come into the desert kingdom of Mara, unfruitful in its soil, but flourishing by trade, and rich in India commodities. The soldiers had here so loaded themselves with spoils and merchandise, that they began rather to think of returning home, and enjoying what they had got, than of pushing their conquests still farther to the destruction of Adel and Mara. The putrid state of the water, in this sultry and unwholesome climate, had afflicted the king with the fever of the country, which he thought, not by any means to remedy or prevent. No consideration could keep him from exposing himself to the most violent sun-beams, and to the more noxious vapours of the night; and it was now the seventh day his fever had been increasing, although he neither ate nor drank. The army expecting, from the king's illness, a speedy order to return, conversed of nothing else within their camp, with that kind of security as if they had already received orders to return home.

The Mahometan army had assembled, and no news had been brought of it to the king. Saleh's influence had united them all; and the king's sickness

ness had made this easier than it otherwise would have been. It happened, then, that, the king's fever abating the ninth day, he sent out to procure himself venison, with which this country abounds, and which is believed, by people of all ranks in Abyssinia, to be the only proper food and restorative after sickness. After having killed sufficiently for the king's immediate use, the huntsmen returned; two only remained, who continued the pursuit of the game through the woods, till they were four days journey distant from their camp, when, being in search of water for their dogs, they met a Moor engaged in the same business with themselves, who shewed them his army encamped at no considerable distance, and in very great numbers. Upon this they returned in all haste to the king to apprize him of his danger, and he sent immediately some horse to discover the number, situation, and designs of the enemy; above all, if possible, to take a prisoner, for the huntsmen had put theirs to death, that he might be no incumbrance to them upon their return.

The king's fever was now gone, but his strength was not returned; and, the necessity of the case requiring it, he attempted to rise from his bed and put on his armour, but, fainting, fell upon his face with weakness, while his servant was girding his sword.

The horse now returned, and confirmed the tidings the huntsmen had brought; they had found the Moorish army in the same place it was first discovered, by the water-side; but the account of their number and appearance was such that the whole
army

army was struck with a panic. The king's wives (as the historian says, by which it should appear he had more than one) endeavoured to persuade him not to risk a battle in the weak state of health he then was, but to retire from this low, unwholesome country, and occupy the passes that lead into Upper Abyssinia, so as to make it impossible for the enemy to follow him into Shoa.

The king having washed and refreshed himself, with a countenance full of confidence, sat down at the door of his tent: whilst officers and soldiers crowded about him, he calmly, in the way of conversation, told them,—“ That, being men of experience as they were, he was surprised they should be liable, at every instant, to panic and despondency, totally unworthy the character of a veteran army. You know,” said he, “ that I came against the king of Adel, and to recover that province, one of the old dependencies of my crown. And though it has happened that, in our march, you have loaded yourselves with riches, which I have permitted, as well out of my love to you, as because it distresses the enemy yet my object was not to plunder merchants. If in battle to-morrow I be beaten, for God forbid that I should decline it when offered, I shall be the first to set you the example how to die like men in the middle of your enemies. But while I am living, it never shall be said that I suffered the standard of Christ to fly before the profane ensigns of infidels. As to what regards our present circumstances, my sickness, and the number of the Moorish troops, these make no alteration
“ in

“ in my good hopes that I shall tread upon the
 “ king of Adel’s neck to-morrow. For as it was
 “ never my opinion that it was my own strength
 “ and valour, or their want of it, which has so
 “ often been the means of preserving me from their
 “ hands, so I do not fear at present that my acci-
 “ dental weakness will give them any advantage
 “ over me, as long as I trust in God’s strength as
 “ much as ever I have done.”

The army, hearing with what confidence and firmness the king spake, began to look upon his recovery as a miracle. They all, therefore, with one accord, took to their arms, and desired to be led forward to the enemy, without waiting till they should come to them. They only beseeched the king that he would not expose his person as usual, but trust to the bravery of his troops, eager for action, without being lavish of that life, the loss of which would be to the Mahometans a greater victory than the regaining all he had conquered. The king hereon, bidding his troops to be of good courage, take rest and refreshment, sent away the women, children, and other incumbrances, to a small convent on the side of the mountain, called *Debra Martel**; and, being informed of the situation of the country in general, and the particular posts where he could get water in greater plenty, he advanced with his army by a slow march towards the enemy.

The next day he received intelligence by a Moor, that the Mahometans had not only thrown poison
 into

* Mountain of the Testimony.

into all the wells, but had also corrupted all the water in the front of the army by various spells and enchantments; that they were not advancing, but were waiting for troops from some of the small districts of Adel that had not yet joined the army. Hereupon the king ordered his Fit-Auraris to advance a day before him, and sent a priest, called *Tecla Sion*, with him, that he might bless and consecrate the water, and thereby free it from the enchantments of the Moors. He himself followed with his army, and sat down by a small river a short way distant from the enemy.

The Fit-Auraris is an officer that commands a party of men, who go always advanced before the front of an Abyssinian army, at a greater or smaller distance, according as circumstances require. His office will be described more at large in the sequel.

The king being arrived at the river, the army began to bathe themselves, their mules, and their horses, in the same manner as is usual throughout all Abyssinia on the feast of the Epiphany. This lustration was in honour of *Tecla Sion*, who had consecrated the water, broken all the magic spells, and changed its name to that of the river Jordan. But, while they were thus employed, the Fit-Auraris had come up with a large party of the enemy, and, with them, a number of women, provided with drugs to poison and enchant the water; and this numerous body of fanatics had fallen so rudely on the Fit-Auraris that it beat him back on the main body, to whom he brought the news of his own defeat.

A violent

A violent panic immediately seized the whole Abyssinian army, and they refused to advance a step farther. The tents had been left standing on the side of the river they first came to, and they then passed to the other side. But, upon sight of the Fit-Auraris, they returned to the tents, that having the river on their front, they might fight the enemy with more advantage if they came to attack them. They did not continue long in this resolution; the greatest part of them were for leaving their tents, and retiring to Abyssinia for assistance, and, when the numbers should be more upon an equality, return to fight the enemy. The Moorish army at this instant coming in sight, increased the number of converts to this opinion.

The king, in the utmost agony, galloping through the ranks, continued to use all manner of arguments with his mutinous soldiers. He told them, that retiring to their camp was to put themselves in prison; that, being mostly composed of horse their advantage was in a plain like that before them; that retreating to join the main body, at such a distance, was a vain idea, as the enemy was so close at their heels. Finally, all he desired of them was, that those who would not fight should only stand as spectators, but not leave their places. As no sign of content or conviction was returned, the king, seeing that all was lost if they disbanded, the enemy being just ready to engage, ordered his master of the horse, and five others, to attack the left wing of the enemy, while he, with a small part of his servants and household, did the same on the right. The

The Abyssinian history, seldom just to the memory of individuals, hath yet, in this instance, (almost a single one), preserved the names of these brave men. The first was Zana Asferi; the second, Tecla; the third, Wanag Araad; the fourth, Saif Segued, (one of the king's sons;) the fifth, Badel Waliz; and the sixth, Kedami. These, as is supposed, with their attendants and servants, (though history is silent but as to the six) fell furiously on the left of the Mahometan army.

The king, at the first onset, killed, with his own hand, the two leaders of the right wing; and his son, Saif Segued, having also slain another considerable officer on the left, a panic seized both these bodies of Moors, and the army apparently began, at one and the same time, to waver: On which the Abyssinians, now ashamed of their conduct, and perceiving the king's danger, with a great shout fell furiously upon the enemy. The whole Moorish army having, by this time, joined, the battle was fought with great obstinacy on both sides, till first the center, then the left wing of the Moors, was broken and dispersed; but the right, consisting chiefly of strangers from Arabia, kept together, and, not knowing the country, retired into a narrow deep valley surrounded by steep perpendicular rocks, covered thick with wood.

The abyssinian army, thinking all at an end by the flight of the Moors, began, after their usual custom, to plunder, by stripping and mangling the bodies of the killed and wounded. But the king, who, from the mistake of the Arabians, saw the destruction of this right wing certain, if immediately pursued,

fued, ordered it every where to be proclaimed through the field, that the whole army should repair to the royal standard, which he had set up on an eminence, and give over plundering, under pain of death. Finding this order, however, slackly obeyed, he himself, scouring the field at the head of a few horse, with his own hand slew two of his soldiers whom he found stripping the dead without regard to his proclamation. This example from a prince, exceedingly sparing of the blood of his soldiers, had the effect to recall them all to the royal standard displayed on a rising ground.

He then separated his army into two divisions; all the foot, and those of his horse that had principally suffered in the severe engagement of the day, he led up to the mouth of the valley where the right wing of the Arabians had shut themselves up; and, having beset all access to the entrance of it, he ordered the foot to climb up through the woods, and on every side surround the valley above the heads of those unhappy people thus devoted to certain destruction.

While this was doing, the king ordered those of the cavalry that had suffered least in the fatigue of the day, to refresh themselves and their horses. He knew no time was lost by this, as the Moorish army that escaped from the engagement, worn out with fatigue, thirst, and hunger, would only retire a short day's march to the water, where, finding themselves not pursued, and incumbered with the number of their wounded, they would necessarily rest themselves; and this was precisely the situa-
tion,

tion, in which his huntsmen first found them by the side of a large pool of water.

The king gave the command of this part of his army to the master of the horse, with orders to pursue them one day farther; whilst he, having taken a short refreshment, began to attack the right wing of the Arabians shut up in the valley. The king, dismounting led the attack against the front of the Arabians, who, seeing their situation now desperate, began to make every effort to get from the valley into the plain. But they did not know yet upon what disadvantageous ground they were engaged, till the soldiers from the rocks above, every way surrounding them, rolled down immense stones which passed through them in all directions. Pressed, therefore, violently, by the king in their front, and in the rear destroyed by an enemy they neither could see nor resist, they fell immediately into confusion, and were, to a man, slaughtered upon the spot; upon which the king, giving to his troops orders for a general plunder, retired himself to his camp, and in his tent received from the master of the horse an account of his expedition.

This officer had proceeded slowly, spreading his troops as wide as possible upon the tract of the retreating enemy, to give a smaller chance for any to escape. All directed their flight towards the pool of water, and were there destroyed without mercy, till a little after sun-set. The pursuers had then advanced to the ground where Saleh king of Marah had gathered the scattered remains of his once powerful army, but now overcome with heat, dispirited by their defeat, and worn out by the fatigues

tigues of a long and obstinate engagement, all that remained of these unfortunate troops were strowed upon the ground, lapping water like beasts, their only comfort that remained, equally incapable of fighting or flying. The master of the horse, in great vigour and strength from his late refreshments and recent victory, had no trouble with these unfortunate people but to direct their execution, and this was performed by the soldiers with all the rage and cruelty that a difference of religion could possibly inspire. For, after the king's speech of the 9th of June, in which he upbraided them with breach of their oath, and that they were slow in avenging the blood of their brethren and priests wantonly slain by the Moors, every man in the army measured the exactness with which he acquitted himself of the sacrament at Hawash, only by the quantity of blood that he could shed. Weary at last with butchery, a few were taken prisoners, and among these was Saleh king of Mara. It was evening before the king returned from the slaughter of the right wing; and it was night when the soldiers, as fatigued with plundering as with fighting, returned to the camp.

The next morning, he heard of the success of his cavalry under the master of the horse, who joined him before mid-day. The unfortunate Saleh was in fight of the whole army, brought before the king, cloathed in the distinguished habit and marks of his dignity in which he had fought the day before at the head of his troops; gold chains were about his arms, and a gold collar, enriched with precious stones about his neck. The king scarcely
deigned

deigned to speak to him, whilst the royal prisoner likewise observed a profound silence. When the army had satisfied their curiosity with the sight of this prince, (once the object of their fear), the king, by a motion of his hand, ordered him to be hanged upon a tree at the entrance of the camp, with all the ornaments he had upon him. After this the queen of Mara, concerning whom so many surprising stories had been told of her poisoning the waters by drugs and enchantments, was, notwithstanding the known partiality of this king for the fair sex, ordered to be hewn in pieces by the soldiers, and her body given to the dogs.

Amda Sion then dispatched a messenger with the news of his victory to the queens his wives, and the rest of the ladies he had left with the main army at Debra Martel, when the monks of the convent immediately began a solemn procession and thanksgiving, attended by the exercise of every sort of work of charity and piety.

It was now the end of July, when the rains in Abyssinia become both constant and violent, that the king called a council of the principal nobility, officers, and priests, to determine whether he should go straight home, or send their wives, children, and baggage before them the direct road, when the light and unincumbered army should take a compass, and lay waste part of the kingdom of Adel they had already invaded, and return in another direction. The majority of the army, and the priests above all, were for the first proposal; but the king and principal officers thought the advantages gained by so much blood were to be followed,
not

not deserted, till they should either have reduced the Mahometans to a state of weakness that should make them no longer formidable to Abyssinia, or, if prosperous fortune still attended them further, extirpate the people and religion together.—This opinion prevailed.

The king, therefore, dismissed his baggage, his women, children, servants, and useless people. He retained an army of veteran soldiers only, more formidable than six times the number that could be brought against them; and, trusting now to the country into which he had marched for support, he advanced, and entered a town called Zeyla, and there took up his quarters. He had scarce taken possession of the town, when that very night he sent a detachment to surprise a large and rich village called Taraca, where he put all the men to the sword, making the women slaves for the service of the army, instead of those whom he had sent home.

The king's views, by such small expeditions, were to accustom his soldiers to fight out of his presence, and wean them from a persuasion, now become general, that victory could not be obtained but where he commanded.

On the 10th of July, the king continued his march, without opposition, to Darbe, whence, the next morning, he sent different parties to the right and left, to burn and destroy the country. They accordingly laid waste all the province of Gassi, slaying Abdullah the Sherriffe, who was the governor and son of Saruch the Imam, author of the conspiracy against him. From thence he fell suddenly

upon Abalgé and Talab, a large district belonging to the king of Adel.

This prince, hearing that Amda Sion, instead of returning as was usual in the rainy season, into Abyssinia, had determined to continue to ravage his whole country, had not, on his part, been remiss in preparing means to resist him; and he had assembled, from every province, all the forces they could raise, to make one last effort against their common enemy.

Amda Sion, therefore, had scarcely retired from the destruction of Talab, when the king of Adel (become now desperate by being so long a spectator of the ruin of his kingdom) marched hastily to meet him, with much less precaution than his own situation, and the character of his enemy, required. Amda Sion, whose whole wish was to bring the Moors to an engagement as often as occasion presented, left off his plundering upon the first news that the king of Adel had taken the field, and allowing him to choose the ground on which he was to fight, the next day he marched against him, having (as sure of victory) first detached bodies of horse to intercept those of the Moors that should fly when defeated; For no general was more provident than this king for the destruction of his enemy. He then led his troops against the king of Adel, and, spurring his horse, was already in the midst of the Moorish army before the most active of his soldiers had time to follow him. The Abyssinians, as usual, threw themselves like madmen upon the Moors, at the sight of the king's danger. The king of Adel was defeated with little resistance: that unfortunate prince himself

self was slain upon the spot, and the greatest part of his army destroyed (after they thought themselves safe) by the ambushes of fresh horse the king had placed in their rear before the battle.

The three children of the king of Adel, and his brother, who had all been in the engagement, seeing the great inferiority of their troops, and terrified at the approaching fate of their country, loading themselves with the most valuable of their effects, (which, in token of humility, they carried upon their heads, shoulders, and in their hands,) came with these presents before the king, who was sitting armed at the door of his tent, and, without further apology, or assurance given, threw themselves, as is the custom of Abyssinia, at his feet, with their foreheads in the dust, intreating pardon for what had hitherto been done amiss; submitting to him as his subjects, professing their readiness to obey all his commands, provided only that he would proceed no further, nor waste and destroy their country, but spare what still remained, which was, for the most part, the property of Arabian merchants who had done him no injury.

But the king seemed little disposed to credit these assurances. He told them plainly, “ That
 “ they, and all-Ethiopia, knew the time was when
 “ they were under his dominion, paid him the same
 “ tribute, and owed him the same allegiance with
 “ the rest of his subjects; that neither he, nor his
 “ predecessors, at that time, had ever oppressed
 “ them, but returned them present for present,
 “ gold for gold, apparel for apparel, and dismissed
 “ them contentedly home whenever they came to
 Q 2 “ pay

“ pay their duty to them : That lately, from sup-
 “ posed weakness in him, when he was young in
 “ the beginning of his reign, and encouraged by
 “ the great addition of their brethren, who flocked
 “ to them from Arabia, they had, without provo-
 “ cation, thrown off their allegiance to him, up-
 “ braiding him as an eunuch, fit only to take care of
 “ the women of their seraglio, with many such
 “ taunting messages, equally unworthy of the ma-
 “ jesty and memory of a prince like him : That,
 “ could this be passed over, still there was a crime
 “ that all the blood of Adel could not atone for :
 “ They had, without provocation, murdered his
 “ priests, burnt their churches, and destroyed his
 “ defenceless people in their villages, merely from
 “ a vain belief that they were too far to be under
 “ his protection : That, to punish them for this,
 “ he was now in the midst of their country, and,
 “ if his life was spared, never would he turn his
 “ back upon Adel while he had ten men with him
 “ capable of drawing their swords. He, therefore,
 “ ordered them to return, and expect the approach
 “ of his army.”

The two eldest children and the brother were so
 struck with the fierce manner and countenance with
 which the king spoke, that they remained perfectly
 silent. But the youngest son (a youth of great spi-
 rit, and who, with the utmost difficulty, had been
 forced by his parents to fly after the battle) answer-
 ed the king with great resolution :—

“ It is a truth known to the whole kingdom, that
 “ Adel has never belonged to any sovereign on
 “ earth but to ourselves. Violence and power,
 “ which

“ which destroy and set up kingdoms, have at times
 “ done so with ours; but that you are not otherwise,
 “ than by these means, king of our country, our
 “ colour, stature*, and complexion sufficiently
 “ shew. We have been free, and were conquered;
 “ we now have attempted to regain our freedom,
 “ and we have failed: We have not been inferior
 “ to you in every kind of civility, receiving you
 “ and your predecessors when you came into our
 “ country, singing before you, and rejoicing, be-
 “ cause we knew that you had always among you
 “ men of great worth and bravery.

“ As to the accusation against us, that we have
 “ robbed the Christians, you yourself see the riches
 “ of our country, which we get by our own in-
 “ dustry and commerce, whilst the Abyssinians
 “ were naked shepherds and robbers. In the days
 “ of your predecessors, a handful of us would have
 “ chased an army of them, and it would be so now,
 “ were it not for the personal valour and conduct
 “ of *you* their prince. But you, better than any
 “ one, can be the judge of this; and I can appeal
 “ to you, how often they have been upon the point
 “ of deserting you, in return for all the victories
 “ and riches they have shared with you; while
 “ there is not a Moor in Adel but would have
 “ willingly died in the presence of such a prince
 “ as you. It is then *you*, not your army that we
 “ fear; we know perfectly the value of both.
 “ You have already enjoyed all the merit and pro-
 “ fit of conquest; but utterly destroying defence-
 “ less

* The Moors in general are much squarer, stouter-made men, than the Abyssinians.

“ less people is unworthy of any king, and still
“ more of a prince of your character.”

The king, without any sign of displeasure at the freedom of this speech, answered him calmly:
“ Words and resolutions like these occasioned your
“ father to lose his life in battle. I come not to
“ argue with you what you are to do, nor did I
“ send for you to preach to you; but if the queen
“ your mother, the rest of your father’s family,
“ and the principal people, who after your father’s
“ death, are now to govern Adel, do not, by to-
“ morrow evening, surrender themselves to me
“ at my tent-door, as you have done, I will lay
“ the province of Adel waste, from the place
“ where I now sit, to the borders of the ocean.”

This unpromising interview with the king was faithfully communicated by the young princes to their mother, earnestly desiring her to trust the king’s mercy, and to throw herself at his feet the next morning without reserve. But those who had been the persuaders of the war (for the late king of Adel was but a weak prince) reckoned themselves in much greater danger with Amda Sion than was the royal family. They therefore agreed to try their fortune again in battle, binding themselves to live and die with each other, by mutual oaths and promises. They also sent to the princes this resolution, by an old enemy of Amda Sion, persuading them to make their escape as soon as possible, and come and head their forces that were then raised, and ready to conquer or die together, when the family should be out of the enemy’s hands.

The king, well informed of what had passed, decamped immediately from the station where he was, exceedingly irritated; and, having passed the great river called Aco, he took post in the town of Marmagab; and the next day, dividing his army, he sent two bodies by different routes into the enemy's territories, with a strict command to leave nothing undestroyed that had the breath of life; he himself with the third division, burning and laying waste the whole country before him, proceeded straight to the place where he heard the chiefs of Adel were assembling an army. There he found some troops, mostly infantry, who kept a good countenance, and seemed perfectly prepared and disposed to engage him. But an immense multitude of useless people covered the plain, old men, women, and children, with the parents, wives, and families of those he had already slain; and these were determined, with the remnant of their countrymen, to conquer this invader, or to perish.

The king, upon perceiving this strange mixture, halted for a time in great surprise and astonishment. He could not penetrate into the motive of assembling such an army; and sending a party of horse, as it were to disperse them, he found every where a stout resistance; soldiers well provided with swords and shields, and a multitude of archers, who rained showers of arrows upon him, while the women, with clubs, poles, flakes, and stones, damped the ardour of his soldiers, who, when they first charged, scarcely expected resistance. The king, seeing the battle every minute become more doubtful, and having but few troops, began to re-
pent

pent that he had weakened his army by detachments ; he instantly dispatched orders to them to advance, and fall upon the enemy in the nearest direction possible. At the same time, he himself made an extraordinary effort with his horse, but all in vain ; and he found, on every side, people who presented themselves willingly to death, but who would not quit their station while they had power to defend themselves in it.

Conspicuous above all these for his dress, his youth, his many acts of valour, and his graceful figure, was the young king of Wypo, who, encouraging his troops, presented himself wherever Amda Sion was in person. The remarkable resistance that this young prince made, soon drew the attention of the king of Abyssinia ; who, sheathing his sword, took a bow in his hand, and, as my historian says, choosing the broadest arrow he could find, struck this young hero through the middle of his neck, so that, half being cut through, his head inclined to one shoulder, and soon after he fell dead among his horse's feet.

This fight was one just calculated to strike such an army as this with terror. They immediately turned their backs, and, unluckily falling in with two detachments marching to the king's relief, they were all cut to pieces to the number of 5000 ; a great proportion of which were women and aged persons, unskilled in war, further than as they were prompted by a long sufferance of injuries, accumulated now to a mass, that made them weary of life. My historian further says, that three only of the Moorish army escaped. On the king's side many
principal

principal officers were killed; and there was scarce one horseman that was not wounded. Amda Sion, therefore, when speaking of this campaign, after his return, among his nobility at Shoa, used to say, "Deliver me from fighting with old women;" alluding to this battle, where he was in the greatest danger. The fate of the unfortunate king of Wypo was particularly hard. He had lately married the king of Adels daughter; and it was the staying for him, and his marriage, that lost the favourable opportunity of fighting the Abyssinians, when the army was in despondency upon the king's being taken ill of the fever.

The next campaign the king began, by a march first to Saffogade, where he assisted at the celebration of the feast of St. John the Baptist; and he gave orders, that day, to raze all the Mahometan mosques to the ground, to destroy all the grain, burn the villages, and put the people to the sword, which was executed accordingly. The king then decamped the fourth of July; and, passing the great river (Zorat) came to the country of the Oritii, and took up his quarters there. The people of this province were in the very worst reputation for cruelty, and hatred of the Christian name. They were perpetually making incursions into the Christian villages, and those that fell alive into their hands, they either castrated, cut off their nose or ears, or otherwise mangled them.

The king, to vindicate the severity he was about to exercise, ordered all those people, who had suffered in this manner, to be collected and brought before him. The number appeared very considerable;

able; and, having inquired in what occupations they had been employed, they answered, that their business was to cut down wood, draw and fetch water, and some of them to take care of the Moorish women. Violently affected with this, he called his principal officers, and commanded them, that, when he decamped with his army the next day, small parties should remain in ambush on each side of the town. The king, early in the morning, marched out with sound of trumpet; and the Moors, thinking the army gone, returning to their houses, were set upon by the parties, and destroyed.

The next place the king came to was Haggaras where he staid eight days, and celebrated there the feast of the Cross; surrounding his camp with palisades, as if he was to stay there a considerable time. Here he made his soldiers deposit all their plunder, leaving it under the care of a weak guard, and marched out with sound of trumpet, as if he was going upon some expedition. There was a large body of troops in ambush, and the Moors, concealed in woods, and hiding-places, attacked the intrenchments as soon as the king was gone, and had forced the palisades, when they were every where surrounded by the parties left behind, and were all cut to pieces, excepting the old men and women, whose noses and lips the king ordered to be cut off, by way of retaliation and then dismissed them. Great store of bows, good arms and cloathing, were taken here, lately brought from Arabia for the use of the confederates.

The king now turned his face homewards, marched off in seven days to Begul in the Sahara, and
thence

thence sent a message to the governor of Ifat, commanding him to send to him all those Christians who had apostatized from their faith in his or his brother's time; with notice, that, if he did not comply, he would put him and all his family to death, and give his command to another family. The king ordered these apostates, when delivered, to be severely whipped, and, fettering them with heavy irons, imprisoned them.

From Begul the army marched to Waz, thence to Gett, and from Gett to Harla, still laying waste the country. From Harla they marched five days to Delhoya, being-determined to make a severe example of this place, because the inhabitants had killed the governor the king had left with them, and, making large fires for the purpose, had burnt and tormented the Christians residing there. He came, therefore, upon this town, and surrounded it in the night; and, after putting men, women, and children to the sword, he razed it to the ground.

From Delhoya he proceeded to Degwa, from thence to Warga, which he treated in the same manner as Delhoya, and then entered the province of Dawaro, where he understood that Hydar, governor of that province, with Saber-eddin, and a very valuable convoy coming to him, under their conduct, from Shoa, were intercepted by Hydar's people, and their guard cut to pieces. Instead, therefore, of proceeding to Shoa, as his intention was, he encamped at Bahalla, and there kept the feast of Christmas, laying the whole province, by parties, under military execution; and hearing there that Joseph, governor of Serca, was in understanding

derstanding with those of Dawaro, he put him in prison, carrying off all his horses, asses, mules, and a prodigious quantity of other cattle, which he drove before him, and ended his expedition by his entry into Shoa.

This is the Abyssinian account of the reign of their prince Amda Sion, a little abridged, and made more conformable to the manner of writing English history. The historian, contrary to the usual practice, gives no account of himself; but he seems to have lived in the time of Zara Jacob, the third reign after this. Though he wrote in Shoa, his book is in pure Geez, there being scarcely an Amharic word in it.

There are three things which I would now observe; not because they are single instances, but, on the contrary, because, though first mentioned here, they are uniformly confirmed throughout the whole Abyssinian history.

The first is, that the king of Abyssinia, is, in all matters ecclesiastical and civil, supreme; that he punishes all offences committed by the clergy in as absolute and direct a manner as if these offences were committed by a layman. Of this the treatment of Honorius is an example, who made use only of spiritual weapons against offences, that surely deserve the censure of all churches.

With whatever propriety this sentence might have been inflicted upon individuals, and, perhaps, without any bad consequence to the public in general, the law of the land, in Abyssinia, could not suffer this to be inflicted on their king, because very bad effects must have followed it towards the com-

monweal; for excommunication there is really a capital punishment if executed with rigour. It is a kind of *interdictio aquæ et ignis*, for you yourself are expressly prohibited from kindling a fire, and every body else is laid under a prohibition from supplying either fire or water. No one can speak, eat, or drink with you, enter your house, or suffer you to enter theirs. You cannot buy nor sell, nor recover debts. If under this situation you should be violently slain by robbers, no inquisition is made into the cause of your death, and your body is not suffered to be buried.

I would submit now to the judgment of any one, what sort of government there would be in Abyssinia, if a priest was suffered to lay the king under such interdict or restriction. The kings of that country do not pretend to be saints; indeed, it may be said, they are the very contrary, leading very free lives. Pretences are never wanting, and it is only necessary to find a fanatic priest (which, God knows, is not a rarity in that country) to unhinge government perpetually, and throw all into anarchy and confusion. But nothing of this kind occurs in their history, though the bigotted Le Grande, and some of the Jesuits, less bigotted than him, have asserted, that such a practice prevailed in the Abyssinian church, to shew its conformity with the church of Rome; which we shall see, however, contradicted almost in every prince's reign.

The second thing I shall observe is, that there is no ground for that prejudice, so common in the writers concerning this country, who say that these people are Nomades, perpetually roving about in tents. If they had ever so little reflected upon it,
there

there is not a country in the world where this is less possible than in Abyssinia, a country abounding with mountains, where every flat piece of ground is, once a-day, during six months rain, cut through by a number of torrents, sweeping cattle, trees, and every thing irresistibly before them; where no field, unless it has some declivity, can be sown, nor even passed over by a traveller, without some danger of being swept away, during the hours of the day when the rain is most violent; in such a country it would be impossible for 30 or 40,000 men to encamp from place to place, and to subsist without some permanent retreat. Accordingly they have towns and villages perched upon the pinnacles of sharp hills and rocks, and which are never thought safe if commanded by any ground above them; in these they remain, as we do in cities, all the rainy season: Nor is there a private person (not a soldier) who hath a tent more than in Britain. In the fair season, the military encamp in all directions cross the country, either to levy taxes, or in search of their enemy; but nothing in this is particular to Abyssinia; in most parts of Africa and Asia they do the same.

The third particular to be observed here is, that, in this prince's reign, the king's sons were not imprisoned in the mountain. For Saif Araad was present with his father at the defeat of Saleh king of Mara, and yet the mountain of Geshen was then set apart as a prison. For the Itcheguè of Debra Libanos was banished there; from which I infer, that after the massacre of the royal family by Judith, on the mountain of Damo, and the flight of the prince

prince Del Naad, to Shoa, the king's children were not confined, nor yet till long after their restoration and return to Tigré, as will appear in the sequel.

Amda Sion died of a natural death at Tegulat in Shoa, after a reign of 30 years, which were but a continued series of victories, no instance being recorded of his having been once defeated.



S A I F A R A A D.

From 1342 to 1370.

This Prince enjoys a peaceable Reign—Protects the Patriarch of Cophts at Cairo from the Persecution of the Soldan.

SAI F ARAAD succeeded his father Amda Sion; and it should seem that, in his time, all was peaceable on the side of Adel, as nothing is mentioned relative to that war. Indeed, if the increase of trade and power in that corner of Abyffinia arose from the troubles and want of security which the merchants laboured under in Arabia, we cannot but suspect, from a parity of reasoning, that the violent manner in which war had been carried on by Amda Sion, must have occasioned a great many inhabitants to repass the Straits, and return to their own homes.

At this time, news were brought from Cairo, that the Soldan had thrown the Coptic patriarch, Marcus, into prison. There was then a constant trade carried on between Cairo and Abyffinia, through
the

the desert; and also from Cairo and Suakem on the Red Sea. Besides, great caravans, formerly composed of Pagans, now of Mahometans, passed from west to east, in the same manner as in ancient times, to buy and disperse India goods through Africa. Saif Araad, not having it in his power to give the patriarch other assistance, seized all the merchants from Cairo, and sent horse to interrupt and terrify the caravans. As the cause of this was well known, and that the patriarch was in prison for the sake only of extorting money from him, people on all sides cried out upon the bad policy of the Soldan, who thereupon ordered Abuna Marcus to be set at liberty, without any other condition, than that he should make peace with Saif Araad on the part of Egypt, which was done through the mediation of that prelate.



W E D E M A S F E R I.

From 1370 to 1380.

Memoirs of this and the following Reign defective.

WE know nothing of this prince, only that he succeeded his father Saif Araad, and reigned ten years; yet his name, which signifies *lover of war*, seems to indicate an active reign. It is remarkable, that in this reign is first mentioned an æra of Abyssinian chronology, which has very much puzzled several learned writers, and the origin of which is
not,

not, perhaps, yet fully known. This is that epoch, called that of Maharat, or Mercy, which Scaliger and Ludolf have called the æra of grace. Scaliger says, he has toiled much before he found out what it was; and I doubt his toil has not been blessed with all the success we could wish. That it is not the æra of redemption, is plain upon a hundred trials, nor of the conversion, nor of Diocletian. What it alludes to we know not, but it is first quoted in the Abyssinian history in this reign, and answers to the year 1348 of Christ; but from what event it had its origin we cannot positively say, nor further, than that all which Scaliger has said concerning it is merely visionary.



D A V I D II.

From 1380 to 1409.

WEDEM ASFERI was succeeded by his brother David, Saif Araad's second son. This prince's reign is remarkable in the annals of the church of Abyssinia, because, at this time, a piece of the true cross, on which our Saviour died, was brought hither from Jerusalem; and, in memory of this great event, the king ordered the sacerdotal vest, or capa, which was before plain, to be embroidered with flowers.

This king, after reigning twenty-nine years, one day viewing a favourite, but vicious horse, received so violent a kick upon his head that it fractured

his skull, so that he died upon the spot, and was buried in the great island of Dek in the lake Dembea, or Tzana.



T H E O D O R U S.

From 1409 to 1412.

Memoirs of this Reign, though held in great Esteem in Abyssinia, defective; probably mutilated by the Ecclesiastics.

DAVID was succeeded by his eldest son Theodorus. He is called Son of the Lion, by the poet, in the Ethiopic encomium upon him, still extant in the liturgy. A miracle is mentioned to have happened, (which would lead us to suspect that he was a faint), during the celebration of his festival, by his mother, who is called Mogessa*. This lady had contented herself with providing great quantity of flesh for the feast; but, to make it more complete, the heavens in a shower supplied it with store of fine fish, ready roasted.

He was buried in the church of Tedba Mariam in Amhara, after having reigned three years. There must have been something very brilliant that happened under this prince, for though the reign is
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* Probably Magwas, or Berhan Magwas, the Glory of Grace; a name often used by queens; for Mogessa has no signification, that I know, in any of the languages of Ethiopia.

so short, it is before all others the most favourite epoch in Abyssinia. It is even confidently believed, that he is to rise again, and to reign in Abyssinia for a thousand years, and in this period all war is to cease, and every one, in fulness, to enjoy happiness, plenty, and peace. Foolish as these legends are, and distant the time, this one was the source of great trouble and personal danger to me, as will be seen in the sequel. What we know certain in this prince's history is, that he abrogated the treaty of partition made by Icon Amlac in favour of the Abuna Tecla Haimanout and his successors, by which one third of the kingdom of Abyssinia was for ever to be set apart as a revenue for the Abuna. This wise prince modified so excessive a provision, reserving to the Abuna for his maintenance a sufficient territory in every province of the kingdom. It is still judged immoderate, and has suffered many defalcations under later princes, who, perhaps, not acting upon the principles of Theodorus, have not been commended by posterity in the manner he has been.



I S A A C.

From 1412 to 1429.

No Annals of this nor the four following Reigns.

THEODORUS was succeeded by Isaac his brother, second son of David. In his reign the Falasha, who, since their overthrow in the time of Amda
 R 2 Sion,

Sion, had been quiet, broke out into rebellion. We do not know the particulars, but apprehend some injustice was at that time done, or attempted against the Jews; for 24 Judges, 12 from Shoa and 12 from Tigré, (the number having been doubled when there were two kings reigning*), were of a different opinion, and would not comply with the king's will, who thereupon deprived them all of their office. The king, coming upon the army of the Falasha in Woggora, entirely defeated them at Koffogué, and, in memory thereof, built a church on the place, and called it Debra Ifaac, which remains there to this day.

Ifaac reigned near 17 years, was a prince of great piety and courage. The annals of his reign, probably during the troublesome time that followed, have been lost, and with them great part of his achievements.



ANDREAS I. OR AMDA SION.

Ifaac was succeeded by his son Andreas, who reigned only seven months, and they were both buried at Tedba Mariam.

TECLA

* That is, while the family of Zagué reigned in Tigré, and that of Solomon in Shoa, before the restoration.

TECLA MARIAM, OR HASEB NANYA.

From 1429 to 1433.

This prince was third son of David, and succeeded his nephew. He reigned four years, and took for his inauguration name, Haseb Nanya.



SARWE YASOUS.

This prince was son of Tecla Mariam, he reigned only four months; his inauguration name was Maharak Nanya. He has been omitted in some of the lists of kings.



AMDA YASOUS.

Sarwe Yafous was succeeded by his brother Amda Yafous, whose inauguration name was Badel Nanya. He was second son of Tecla Mariam, and reigned nine months.

ZARA

ZARA JACOB.

From 1434 to 1468.

Sends Ambassadors from Jerusalem to the Council of Florence—First Entry of the Roman Catholics into Abyssinia, and Dispute about Religion—King persecutes the Remnants of Sabaism and Idolatry—Mabometan Provinces rebel, and are subdued—The King dies.

THESE very short reigns were followed by one of an extraordinary length. Zara Jacob, fourth son of David II. succeeded his nephew, and reigned 34 years, and, at his inauguration, took the name of Constantine. He is looked upon in Abyssinia to have been another Solomon; and a model of what the best of sovereigns should be. From what we know of him, he seems to have been a prince who had the best opportunity, and with that the greatest inclination to be instructed in the politics, manners, and religion of other countries.

A convent had been long before this established at Jerusalem for the Abyssinians, which he had in part endowed, as appears by his letters still extant*, written to monks of that convent. He also obtained from the Pope † a convent for the Abyssinians at Rome, which to this day is appropriated to them, though

* Vid. Ludolf, lib. 3. No. 29. I have this letter at length prefixed to the large volume of Canons and Councils, a copy of which was sent by Zara Jacob to the monks in Jerusalem.

† St. Stefano in Rotendis.

though it is very feldom that either there, or even at Jerufalem, there are now any Abyffinians. By his defire, and in his name, ambaffadors (*i. e.* priests from Jerufalem) were fent by Abba Nicodemus, the then Superior, who affifted at the council of Florence, where, however, they adhered to the opinion of the Greek church about the proceeding of the Holy Ghof, which created a fchifm between the Greek and Latin churches. This embaffy was thought of confequence enough to be the fubject of a painting in the Vatican, and to this picture we owe the knowledge of fuch an embaffy having been fent.

The mild reign of the laft Soldan of Egypt feems greatly to have favoured the difpofition of Zara Jacob, in maintaining an intercourfe with Europe and Afia. And it is for the firft time now in this reign that we read of a difpute upon religion with the Franks, or Frangi, a name which afterwards became more odious and fatal to whomfoever it was applied. Abba George is faid to have difputed before the king upon fome point of his religion, and to have confuted his opponent even to conviction. We are not informed of the name of Abba George's antagonist, but he is thought to have been a Venetian painter *, who lived many years in Abyffinia, and, it is believed, died there. From this time, however, in almoft every reign, there appear marks of a party formed in favour of the church of Rome, which probably had its firft rife from the Abyffinian embaffy to the council of Florence.

Although

† Francisco de Branca Leon.

Although the established religion in Abyssinia was that of the Greek church of Alexandria, yet many different superstitions prevailed in every part of the country. On the coast of the Red Sea, as well as the Ocean, that is in the low provinces adjoining to the kingdom of Adel, the greatest part of the inhabitants were Mahometans; and the conveniencies of trade had occasioned these to disperse themselves through many villages in the high country, especially in Woggora, and in the neighbourhood of Gondar. Dembea on the south, and the rugged district of Samen on the east, were crowded with many deformed sects, while the people of the low valleys, towards Nubia, the Agows at the head of the Nile, and those of the same name, though of a different nation and language, at the head of the Tacazzé, in Lasta, were, for the greatest part, Pagans, *i. e.* of the old religion of Sabeans, worshipping the planets, stars, the wind, trees, and such like. But a more abominable worship than this seemed especially predominant among some of the Agows at the source of the Nile, and the people bordering upon Nubia, as they adored the cow and serpents for their gods, and supposed that, by the latter, they could divine all that was to happen to them in futurity.

Whether it was that a long war had thrown a veil over these abuses, or whether (which is more probable) a spirit of toleration had still prevailed in this country, which had at first been converted to Christianity without blood-shed, it is not easy at this time to say. Only their history does not mention, that, before the reign of this prince, idolatry had been considered as a capital crime, or judicially inquired

quired into, and tried as such. An accusation, however, at this time, being brought against some families for worshipping the cow and the serpent, they were, by the king's orders, seized and brought before himself sitting in judgment, with the principal of his clergy, and with his officers of state, with whom he associated some strangers, lately come from Jerusalem; a custom which prevails to this day. These criminals were all capitally convicted, and executed. A proclamation followed, declaring, That any person who did not, upon his right hand, carry an amulet, with these words, *I renounce the devil for Christ our Lord*, should forfeit his personal estate, and be liable to corporal punishment.

It has been the custom of all Pagan nations to wear amulets upon their arms, and different parts of their bodies. From the Gentiles this usage was probably first learned by the Jews. Amulets were adopted by the Mahometans, but, till now, not worn in Abyssinia by any Christians.

These executions, which at first consisted of seven people only, began to be repeated in different places, and at different times. The person employed as inquisitor, and the manner this examination was made, tended to make it still more odious. Amda Sion, the Acab Saat, was the man to whom this persecution was committed. He was the king's principal confidant; of very austere manners: he neither shaved his head nor changed his cloaths; had no connection with women, nor with any great man in court; never saw the king but alone, and, when he appeared abroad, was constantly attended by a number of soldiers, with drums and trumpets, and

and other equipage, not at all common for a clergyman. He had under him a number of spies, who brought him intelligence of any steps taken in idolatry or treason; and, after being, as he supposed, well informed, he went to the house of the delinquent, where he first refreshed himself and his attendants, then ordered those of the house he came for, and all that were with them, to be executed in his presence.

Among those that suffered were the king's two sons-in-law, married to his daughters Medehan Zamidu, and Berhan Zamidu, having been accused by their wives, the one of adultery, the other of incest: they were both put to death in their own houses, in a very private and suspicious manner. This execution being afterwards declared by the king in an assembly of the clergy and states, certain priests, or others, from Jerusalem, in public, condemning this procedure of the king, as contrary to law, sound policy, and the first principles of justice, which seems to have had such an effect that we hear no more of these persecutions, nor of Amda Sion the persecutor, during the whole of this reign.

The king now turned his thoughts upon a nobler object, which was that of dividing his country into separate governments, assigning to each the tax it should pay, at what time, and in what manner, according to the situation and capacity of each province. The prosperity of the Moorish states, from the extensive trade constantly carried on there, the bad use they made of their riches by employing them in continual rebellions, made it necessary that

the king should see and inquire into each person's circumstances, which he proposed to do, as was usual, before the time of their several investitures.

The chief of the rich district of Gadai, was the first called on by the king, as it is on this occasion that considerable presents (seldom less than two years rent of the province) are given, about one half to the king, the other among his courtiers. There was, at this period, a Moorish woman of quality in court, called the queen of Zeyla. She had been brought to the palace with a view that the king should marry her, but he disliking her for the length, as is said, or some other defect, in her fore-teeth, had married her to a nobleman.

This injury had sunk very deep in the breast of the queen of Zeyla, though she was only nominally so, having been expelled from her kingdom before her coming into Abyffinia. But it happened that she was sister to Mihico son of Mahomet, chief of Gadai, whom she earnestly persuaded to stay at home, and she succeeded so far, as not only to prevail upon him to be absent, but also to withdraw himself entirely from his allegiance.

At this very time, the king was informed by a faithful servant, a nobleman of Hadea, that the chief of Gadai had long been meditating mischief, and endeavouring to prevail with the king of Adel to march with his army, while great part of the principal people of Hadea, whom he had seduced, were to fall, on the opposite side, upon Dawaro and Bali.

The king, however, received certain accounts from Adel, that all was quiet there; and inquiring who

who of his Moorish servants were of the conspiracy in Hadea, he found them to be Goodalu, Alarea, Ditho, Hybo, Ganzè, Saag, Gidibo, Kibben, Gugulé, and Haleb. As there were still forces enough in the province to resist this confederacy, the king, instead of levying an army against them, thought the proper way was to send them a governor, who should divide the interest and strength of the enemy. There was then an uncle of Mihico remaining in exile at Dejan *, whither he had been sent formerly into banishment at the instance of his nephew, but he still preserved the command of a small district called Bomo, as well as the good inclinations of his own subjects of Gadai, who held his memory in great veneration. The king, therefore, sent for this governor of Bomo, and, setting before him the behaviour of his nephew, he gave him the investiture of his government, with many presents both useful and honourable ; and, having ordered some troops from Amhara to attend him, he dismissed him, to punish and expel his nephew from the province of Gadai.

The fair of Adel was nigh, and thither all the inhabitants of Bali and Dawaro go. It was at this time the conspirators of Hadea had agreed to fall upon the provinces ; while, probably, those at the fair had been likewise destined to cut off the inhabitants which might be found there. To counteract these designs, the king, by proclamation, expressly forbade any of the inhabitants of Bali or Dawaro to go to the fair, but all to join the governor

* One of the steep mountains used for prisons.

nor of Bomo, who no sooner presented himself in his district, than the people of all ranks flocked to him and submitted.

Mihico saw himself undone by this address of the king, of which he was quite uninformed. He fled immediately with his family, endeavouring, if possible, to reach Adel; and having come the length of Bawa Amba, a high mountain, where is one of the narrowest and most difficult passes between the high country and the Kolla, here he strowed about, in different places, all the riches that he had brought along with him, in hopes that his pursuers, wearied by the time they came there, should, by the difficulty of the ground, and the booty everywhere to be found, be induced to proceed no further. But this stratagem did not succeed; for he was so closely followed that he was overtaken and slain, his head, hands, and feet were cut off, and immediately sent to the king, who, after public rejoicings, gave the government of Gadai to the person who first informed him of Mihico's conspiracy, and confirmed the governor of Bomo in the province of Hadea likewise, which he made hereditary in his family. In order also to be more in readiness to suppress such insurrections for the future, he gave his Christian soldiers lands adjacent to each other, forming a line all along the frontiers of the Mahometan provinces of Bali, Fatigar, Wadge, and Hadea, that they might be ready at an instant to suppress any tumult in the provinces themselves, or resist any incursions from the kingdom of Adel.

The king now set about fulfilling another duty of his reign, that of repairing the several churches in

Abyssinia which had been destroyed in the late war by the Mahometans, and of building new ones, which it is their constant custom to vow and to erect where victories had been obtained over an infidel enemy. While thus employed, news were sent him from the patriarch of Alexandria, that the church of the virgin had been destroyed at that city by fire. Full, therefore, of grief for this misfortune, he immediately founded another in Abyssinia, to repair that loss which Christianity had suffered in Egypt.

Being now advanced in life, he would willingly have dedicated the remainder of it to these purposes, when he was awakened from his religious employments by an alarm of war. The rebels of Hadea, by changing their chief, had not altered their dispositions to rebel, and, seeing the king given to other pursuits, they began to associate and to arm. The governor, whom the king had created after the death of Mihico, gave the king a very late notice of this, which he dissembled, as he was queen Helena's father: but having, under pretence of consecrating the church of St. Cyriacos, assembled a sufficient number of men whom he could trust, he made a sudden irruption into the rebel provinces before they had united their forces. The first that the king met to oppose him was an officer of the rebel governor of Faigar, who imagined he was engaging only the van of a separate body of Zara Jacob's troops, not believing him to be yet come up in person with so small a number: But being undeceived, he bestirred himself so courageously, that he reached the king's person, and broke his lance upon

upon him ; but, in return, received a blow from the lance of the king which threw him to the ground ; at the fight of which his whole party took flight, but were overtaken and put to the sword almost to a man ; nor was the king's loss considerable, his number being so small.

Upon this defeat, Hiradin, the governor's brother, declared his revolt, and advanced to fight the king at the passage of the river Hawash. Zara Jacob, much offended at this fresh delinquency, sent an officer, called Han Degna, who found him at the watering-place unsuspecting an enemy ; and, before he could put his army in order, he was surrounded, slain, and his head sent to the king, who rejoiced much at the sight, it being brought him on Christmas day.

After this the king collected his dead, and buried them with great honour and shew of grief. He then summoned the governor of Hadea, who professed himself willing to submit his loyalty and conduct to the strictest inquiry. Above all the reasons which hindered him from attending the king, one was known to be, that the queen was not without reason suspected to favour the Mahometants, being originally of that faith herself, and, therefore, for fear of revealing his secret to the enemy, the king did not choose to make her father, the governor of Hadea, partaker in his expedition, but, from jealousy to the queen, ordered him to stay at home. Notwithstanding which it was found, that all in his government were in their allegiance, and ready to march upon the shortest notice had the king required

quired it; therefore he extended his command over the conquered provinces, in room of the rebel governors whom he had removed.



B Æ D A M A R I A M.

From 1468 to 1478.

*Revives the Banishment of Princes to the Mountain—
War with Adel—Death of the King—Attempts by
Portugal to discover Abyssinia and the Indies.*

BÆDA MARIAM succeeded to the throne (as his historian says) against his father's inclination, after having received much ill usage during the earlier part of his life, of which this was the occasion. His mother took so violent and irregular a longing to see her son king, that she formed a scheme, by the strength of a party of her relations and friends, trusting to the weakness of an old man, to force him into a partnership with his father. Examples of two kings, at the same time, and even in this degree of relation, were more than once to be found in the Abyssinian annals, but those times were now no more. A strong jealousy had succeeded to an unreasonable confidence, and had thrown both the person and pretensions of the heirs-apparent of this age to as great a distance as was possible.

The queen, whose name was Sion Magafs, or the Grace of Sion, first began to tamper with the clergy, who, though they did not absolutely join her

her in her views, shewed her, however, more encouragement than was strictly consistent with their allegiance. From these she applied to some of the principal officers of state, and to those about the king, the best affected to her son and his succession. These, aware of the evil tendency of her scheme, first advised her, by every means, to lay it aside; and afterwards, seeing she still persisted, and afraid of a discovery that would involve her accomplices in it, they disclosed the matter to the king himself, who resented the intention so heinously, that he ordered the queen to be beaten with rods till she expired. Her body afterwards was privately buried in a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, not far from Debra Berhan*.

Nothing had hitherto appeared to criminate the young prince. But it was soon told the king, that, after the death of the queen, her son Bæda Mariam had taken frankincense and wax-tapers from the churches, which he employed, at stated times, in the observation of the usual solemnities over his mother's grave. The king, having called his son before him, began to question him about what he had heard; while the prince, without hesitation, gave him a full account of every circumstance, glorying in what, he said, was his duty, and denying that he was accountable to any man on earth for the marks of affection which he shewed to his mother.

The king, considering his son's justification as a reproach made to himself for cruelty, ordered the

VOL. II. S prince,

* Another church on a hill, one of the quarters of Gondar. It signifies the Hill of Glory, or Brightness.

prince, and, with him, his principal friend Meherata Christos, to be loaded with irons, and banished to the top of a mountain; and it is hard to say where this punishment would have ended, had not the monks of Debra Koffo and Debra Libanos, and all those of the desert, (who thought themselves in some measure accomplices with his mother), by exhortations, pretended prophecies, dreams and visions, convinced the king, that Providence had decreed unalterably, that none but his son, Bæda Mariam, should succeed him. To this ordinance the old king bowed, as it gave him a prospect of the long continuance of his family on the throne of Abyffinia.

Zara Jacob was no sooner dead, that his son, Bæda Mariam, who succeeded him, began to apply himself seriously to the affairs of government. From the reign of Judith, (in the tenth century), when so many of the princes of the royal family were massacred, the custom of sending the royal children to confinement on the top of a mountain had been discontinued. These children all lived at home with their respective fathers and mothers, like private persons; and the kings seemed to connive at abolishing their former practice, for no mountain had been yet chosen as a substitute to the unfortunate Damo. The disagreement between Zara Jacob and his queen, with the cause of it, and the prince's frankness and resolution, seemed to point out the necessity of reviving the salutary severity of the ancient laws. Bæda Mariam gave orders, therefore, to arrest all his brethren, and send them prisoners for life to the high mountain of *Geshen*,

on the confines of Amhara and Begemder, which ever after continued the state-prison for the royal children, till a slaughter, like to that made upon mount Damo, was the occasion, as we shall see, of deserting Geshen likewise.

The king applied himself next to measures for the better government of his country. He ordered a general pardon to be proclaimed to all who, by the severity of the late reign, lay under sentence of death, banishment, or any other punishment; and, convoking the states of the kingdom, he met them with a cheerfulness and openness which inspired confidence into every rank, while, at the same time, he filled all the places he found vacant, or that he thought proper to change, with men of the greatest integrity. He then reviewed the whole cavalry that were in his service, which he distributed into bodies, and stationed them in places where they could be readiest called, to execute those designs he had then in contemplation.

The next year the king went to Debra Libanos in Shoa. It was, however, observed, that his preparations were not such as were usual in these short journies, nor such as were made in peaceable times. On the contrary, orders were sent to the borders of Tigré to receive the royal army, which was soon to arrive in those parts. The rumour of this was quickly spread abroad, and affected all the neighbouring states, according to their several interests. Mahomet king of Adel was the first that took the alarm. Tho' a kind of peace had subsisted for several years between Adel and Abyffinia, yet inroads had been made from each country into the other;

and these might have served them as pretexts for war, had that been the inclination of the times. Yet, as both countries happened to be disposed for peace, these outrages passed unnoticed.

But, to prevent surprize upon this last movement of the troops, the king of Adel thought he had a right to be informed of Bæda Mariam's intentions, and, with this view, he sent some of the principal people of his country as ambassadors, under pretext of congratulating the king upon his accession to the throne. They met the king in Shoa, and had carried with them very considerable presents. They were received in a very distinguished manner; and the presents which Bæda Mariam returned to the king of Adel were nothing inferior to those he accepted. After having entertained the ambassadors several days with feasting and diversions, he confirmed a peace under the same duties upon trade that had formerly subsisted.

The king of Dancali also, old, infirm, yet constant in his attachment to the Abyssinians, was not without his inquietudes, though he was not afraid they intended to attack his poor territory with an army. He dreaded lest the army in its march should drink up that little quantity of water which remained to him in summer, and, without which, his kingdom would become uninhabited. It is a low, sandy district, lying on the Red Sea, just where the coast, after bearing a little to the east of north from Suez to Dancali, makes an elbow, and stretches nearly east, as far as the Straits of Babelmandeb. It has the mines of fossile-salt immediately on the north and north-west, a desert part of the province of

of Dawaro to the south, and the sea on the north. But it has no port, excepting a spacious bay, with tolerable anchorage, called *the Bay of Bilur* *, in lat. $13^{\circ} 3'$, and, corruptly in vulgar maps and writings, the Bay of Bayloul.

The kingdom of Dancali is bounded on the east at Azab by part of the kingdom of Adel, and the myrrh country. The king is a Mahometan, as are all his subjects. They are called Taltal, are all black, and only some of them woolly-headed; a circumstance which probably arises from a mixture with the Abyssinians, whose hair is long. There are but two small rivers of fresh water in the whole kingdom; and even these are not visible above ground in the hot season, but are swallowed up in the sand, so as to be dug for when water is wanted.

In the rainy season, these are swollen by rain falling from the sides of the mountains and from the high lands of Abyssinia, and then only they run with a current into the sea. All the rest of the water in this country is salt, or brackish, and not fit for use, unless in absolute necessity or dry years. Even these sometimes fail, and they are obliged to seek, far off in the rainy frontiers of Abyssinia, water for themselves, and pasture for their miserable goats and sheep.

When the Indian trade flourished, this prince's revenue arose chiefly from furnishing camels for the transport

* Bilur, in the language of Sambar, signifies *fossile salt*; if it is coloured with any mineral, so as to be either red or green, it is, in this latter case, applied often to emeralds, and green rock crystal.

transport of merchandife to all parts of Africa. Their commerce is now confined to the carrying bricks of folid, or foſſile falt, dug from pits in their own country, which, in Abyſſinia, paſs inſtead of ſilver currency; theſe they deliver at the neareſt market in the high lands at a very moderate profit, after having carried them from the ſea-ſide through the dry and burning deſerts of their own country, at the great riſk of being murdered by Galla.

The preſents ſent to Bæda Mariam from Dancali did not make a great figure when compared with thoſe of Adel. They conſiſted of one horſe, a mule, a ſhield of elephant's hide, a poiſoned lance, two ſwords, and ſome dates. Poor as theſe preſents were, they were much more reſpected than thoſe of Adel, becauſe they came from a loyal hert; while the others were from a nation diſtinguiſhed every year by ſome premeditated action of treachery and bloodſhed. The king having firſt ſent for the Abuna, Imaranha Chriſtos, and called the ambaffadors of Dancali and Adel into his preſence, declared to them, that neither of theſe ſtates was to be the ſcene of war, but that he was inſtantly to march againſt the Dobas *, whoſe conſtant inroads into his country, and repeated cruelties, he was reſolved no longer to ſuffer. He required the ambaffadors to warn their maſters to keep a ſtrict neutrality, otherwiſe they would be inſallibly involved in the ſame calamities with that nation.

Lent

* A race of very barbarous people, all ſhepherds, having great ſubſtance, and much reſembling the nations of Galla. They are Pagans.

Lent being now near, the king returned to Ifras, there to keep his fast, and distributed his horse on the side of Ambasanet, having sent orders to the governor of Amhara to join him immediately, who was then at Salamat besieging a party of rebels upon Mount Gehud, which signifies the *Mountain of Manifestation*. It was the intention of the king; that the troops of Amhara, Angot, and Tigré should press upon the enemy from the high country, while he with his own troops (chiefly horse) should cut off their retreat to the plains of salt; and it was here that the king of Dancali was afraid that they would interfere with his fresh water.

This prince kept strictly his promise of secrecy made to Bæda Mariam, while the king of Adel observed a very different line of conduct; for he not only discovered the king's intention, but he invited the Dobas to send their wives, children, and effects into Adel, while his troops should cut off the king's provision, and fight him wherever they saw that it could be done with advantage. The plan was speedily embraced. Twelve clans of Dobas marched with their cattle, as privately as possible, for Adel; but the king's intelligence was too good, and his motions too rapid, to allow their schemes to be carried into execution. With a large body of horse, he took possession of a strong pass, called Fendera; and when that unhappy people, fatigued with their march, and incumbered with baggage, arrived at this spot, they were cut to pieces without resistance, and without distinction of age or sex.

The king, at the beginning of this campaign, declared, that his intention was not to carry on
war

war with the Dobas as with an ordinary enemy; but totally to extirpate them as a nuisance; and, to shew himself in earnest in the declaration he now made a vow never to depart from the country till he had plowed and sown the fields, and ate the crop on the spot with his army. He, therefore, called the peasants of two small neighbouring districts, Wadge and Ganz, and ordered them to plow and sow that part; which having seen done, the king went to Axum, but returned again to the Dobas, by the feast of the Epiphany. That cruel, restless nation, saw now the king's real intent was their utter destruction, and that there was no possibility of avoiding it but by submission. This prudent conduct they immediately adopted; and, great part of them renouncing the Pagan religion, they so satisfied Bæda Mariam that he decamped from their country, after having, at his own expence, restored to them a number of cattle equal to that which he had taken away, having also given up, untouched, the crop which had been sown, and recompensed the peasants of Wadge and Ganz for their corn and labour.

Having resolved to chastise the king of Adel for his treacherous conduct, he retired southward into the provinces Dawaro and Ifat; and, as if he had had no other views but those of peace, he crossed over to Begemder, where he directed the Abuna to meet him with his young son Iscander, of whom his queen, Romana Werk *, had been lately delivered. From this he proceeded to Gojam, every
where

* The pomegranate of gold.

where leaving orders with the proper officers to have their troops in readiness against his return; and having delivered the young prince to Ambasa David, governor of that province, he proceeded to Gimbota, a town lying on the banks of the Nile, which, in honour of his son's governor, he changed to David Harafa *. Having thus settled the prince to his mind, he sent orders to the army in Tigré and Dawaro to advance into the southernmost frontier of Adel. He himself returned by the way he went to Gojam, and collecting the troops, and the nobility who flocked to him on that occasion, he marched straight for the same country.

Whilst the king was occupied in these warlike preparations, a violent commotion arose among his clergy at home. In the reign of Zara Jacob, a number of strangers, after the council of Florence, had come into Abyssinia with the Abuna Imaranba Christos. Among these were some monks from Syria, or Egypt, who had propagated a heresy which had found many disciples. They denied the consubstantiality of Christ, whom they admitted to be perfect God and likewise perfect man, but maintained that what we call his *humanity* was a precious substance, or nature, not composed of flesh, blood, and arteries (like ours), but infinitely more noble, perfect, peculiar to, and only existing in himself. An assembly of the clergy was called, this heresy condemned, and those who had denied the perfect manhood of our Saviour were put to death by different kinds of torture. Some were sent to die

* The station of David.

die in the Kolla, others exposed, without the necessaries of life, to perish with cold on the tops of the highest mountains.

There was another motive of discontent which appeared in that assembly, and which affected the king himself. A Venetian, whose name was Branca Leon, was one of the strangers that arrived in Ethiopia at the time above mentioned. He was a limner by profession, and exceedingly favoured by the late king, for whom he had painted, with great applause, the pictures of Abyssinian saints for the decoration of the churches. It happened that this man was employed for an altar-piece of Atronsa Mariam; the subject was a common one in Italy, Christ in his mother's arms; where the child according to the Italian mode, is held in his mother's left arm. This is directly contrary to the usage of the East, where the left hand is reserved for the purpose of washing the body when needful, and is therefore looked upon with dishonour, so much, indeed, that at table the right hand only is put into the plate.

The fanatic and ignorant monks, heated with the last dispute, were fired with rage at the indignity which they supposed was offered to our Saviour. But the king, struck with the beauty of the picture, and thinking blood enough had been already shed upon religious scruples, was resolved to humour the spirit of persecution no farther. Some of the ringleaders of these disturbances privately disappearing, the rest saw the necessity of returning to their duty; and the picture was placed on the altar of Atronsa Mariam, and there preserved, notwithstanding

standing the devastation of the country by the Moors under the reigns of David III. and Claudius; till many years afterwards, together with the church; it was destroyed by an inroad of the Galla.

In the mean time, the army from Dawaro had entered the kingdom of Adel under Betwudet * Adber Yafous, and expecting to find the Moors quite unprepared, they had begun to waste every thing with fire and sword. But it was not long before they found the inhabitants of Adel ready to receive them, and perfectly instructed of the king's intentions, from the moment he left Dawaro, to go to meet his son in Gojam. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, from the multitude of Moors constantly in his army, who, though they put on the appearance of loyalty, never ceased to have a warm heart towards their own religion and countrymen. Advanced parties appeared as soon as the Abyssinian army entered the frontiers; and these were followed by the main body in good order, determined to fight their enemy before they had time to ravage the country.

A battle immediately followed, very bloody, as might be expected from the mutual hatred of the soldiers, from the equality in numbers, and the long experience each had in the other's manner of fighting. The battle, often on the point of being lost, was as often retrieved by the personal exertion of the Moorish officers, upon whom the loss principally

* Betwudet is an officer that has nearly the same power as Ras; there were two of these, and both being slain at one battle, as we shall see in the sequel, the office grew into disuse as unfortunate.

cipally fell. Sidi Hamet, the king's son, the chiefs of Arar, Nagal, Telga, Adegá, Hargai, Gadai, and Kumo, were slain, with several other principal men, who had either revolted from the king of Abyssinia, or whom friendship to the king of Adel had brought from the opposite coast of Arabia.

The king was still advancing with diligence, when he was overtaken by an express, informing him that his queen Romana was delivered of another prince, christened by the name of Anquo Israel. Upon which good tidings he halted at once to rest and feast his army; and, in the middle of the festivity, an express from Adber Yafous, brought him news of the complete victory over the Moors, and that there was now no army in Adel of consequence enough to keep the field. Hereupon the king detached a sufficient number of troops to reinforce Adber Yafous in Adel, and continued himself recruiting his army, and making greater preparations than before, that, during the first of the season, he might utterly lay waste the whole Moorish country, or so disable them that they might, for many years, be content to enjoy peace under the condition of becoming his tributaries.

While planning these great enterprizes, the king seized with a pain in his bowels, whether from poison or otherwise is not known, which occasioned his death. Having, a few moments before he died, recollected that his face was turned on a different side from the kingdom of Adel, he ordered himself to be shifted in his bed, and placed so as to look directly towards it, (a token how much his heart was set upon its destruction) and in that posture he expired.

He was a prince of great bravery and conduct ; very moderate in all his pleasures ; of great devotion ; zealous for the established church, but steady in resisting the monks and other clergy in all their attempts towards persecution, innovation, and independency. Many stories have been propagated of his inclination to the Catholic religion, and of his aversion to having an Abuna from Egypt ; and it is said, that, during his whole reign, he obstinately persisted in refusing to suffer any Abuna in his kingdom. But these are fables invented by the Portuguese priests, who came into Abyssinia some time afterwards, and forged anecdotes to serve their own purposes ; for, unless we except the story of the Venetian, Branca Leon, there is not a word said of any connection Bæda Mariam ever had with the few Catholics that then were in his country, and even that was a connection of his father's. And as to the other story, we find in history, that the Abuna had been in the country ever since his father Zara Jacob's time ; and that, at his desire, the Abuna, Imaranha Christos, came and received, in the field of battle, large donations in gold, almost as often as the king gained a victory. Bæda Mariam died at the age of forty, after reigning ten years, which were spent in continual war ; during the whole course of which he was successful, and might (if he had lived) have very much weakened the Moorish states, and prevented the terrible retaliation that fell afterwards from that quarter upon his country.—It will be proper now to look back into the transactions in Europe, which are partly connected with the history of this kingdom.

The conquest of the north part of Africa followed the reduction of Egypt, and the whole coast of Barbary was crowded with Mahometans, from Alexandria to the western ocean, and from the Mediterranean to the edge of the desert. Even the desert itself was filled with them; and trade, security, and good faith, were now everywhere disseminated in regions, a few years before the seat of murder and pillage.

Tarik and his Moors had invaded Spain; Musa followed him, and conquered it. The history of Count Julian is in every one's hand; unfortunate in having had the provocation, still more so in having had the power to revenge it, by sacrificing at once his sovereign, his country, religion, and life, to the private injuries done to his daughter. As often as I have read the history of this catastrophe, so often have I regretted to see with how little ceremony this young lady had been treated by authors of all languages and nations. They call her *Caaba*, with the same ease and indifference as they would have called her Anne, or Margaret. This must be from mere ignorance. *Caaba* could not be the name of the daughter of Count Julian before her seduction. *Caaba* means *Harlot*, in the broadest way possible to express the term, and very cruelly and improperly, it seems to be given her, even after her misfortune; for she was a daughter of the first family in Spain, of unexceptionable virtue. She was not seduced, but *forced* by the king, while in the palace, and under protection of the queen.

A great influx of trade followed the conquest; and the religion, that contained little restraint and

great

great indulgence, was every where embraced by the vanquished, who long had been Christians in name only. On the other side, the conquerors were now no longer that brutish set of madmen, such as they were under the Khalifat of the fanatic Omar. They were now men eminent for their rank and attainments in every species of learning. This was a dangerous crisis for Christianity, and nothing else was threatened than its total subversion. The whole world, without the help of England, had not virtue enough to withstand this torrent. That nation, the favourite weapon in the hand of Heaven for chastising tyranny and extirpating false religion, now lent its assistance, and the scale was quickly turned.

At that time Europe saw with surprise an inconsiderable number of fishermen, very inconveniently placed at the farthest end of the Adriatic Gulf, applying themselves with unwearied care and patience to cultivate, gather together, and improve the remnants and gleanings of the Indian trade by Alexandria, under all the cruelties and oppressions of those ignorant and barbarous conquerors the Turks, whom no prospect of gain, no change of place, no frequency of commerce, could ever civilize or subject to the rules of justice. Venice became at once the great market for spices and perfumes, and consequently the most considerable maritime power that had appeared in Europe for ages.

Genoa followed, but sunk, after great efforts, under the power of her rival; while Venice remained mistress of the sea, of a large dominion up-

on the continent, and of the Indian spice trade, the origin and support of all her greatness.

Rhodes, and the ships of the Military Order of St. John of Jerusalem, to whom that island belonged, greatly harassed the maritime trade carried on by the Moors in their own vessels from Alexandria, who were every day more discouraged by the unexpected progress of these *once petty* Christian states. Trade again began to be carried on by caravans in the desert. Large companies of merchants from Arabia, passed in safety to the western ocean, and were joined by other traders from the different parts of Barbary while passing to the southward of them, and that with such security and expedition, that the Moors began to set little value on their manner of trading by sea, content now again with the labours and conveniencies of their ancient, faithful friend, and servant, the camel.

Ormus, a small island in the Persian Gulf, had, by its convenient situation, become the market for the spice trade, after the discouragements it had received in the Mediterranean. All Asia was supplied from thence, and vessels, entering the Straits of Babelmandeb, had renewed the old resort to the temple of Mecca. From hence all Africa, too, was served by caravans, that never since have forsaken that trade, but continue to this day, and cross the continent, in various directions.

John I. king of Portugal, after many successful battles with the Moors, had at last forced them to cross the sea, and return vanquished to their native country. By this he had changed his former dishonourable name of *bastard* to the more noble and
much

much more popular one of John the *avenger*. This did not satisfy him. Assisted by some English navigators, he passed over to Barbary, laid siege to Ceuta, and speedily after made himself master of the city. This early connection with the English arose by his having married Philipina of Lancaster, sister of Henry IV. king of England, by whom he had five sons, all of them heroes, and, at the taking of Ceuta, capable of commanding armies. Henry, the youngest, scarce twenty years of age, was the first that mounted the walls of that city in his father's presence, and was thereupon created Master of the Order of Christ, a new institution, whose sole end and view was the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

Although every thing promised fair to John in the war of Africa, yet it early occurred to prince Henry, that a small kingdom like Portugal never could promise to do any thing effectual against the enormous power of the Mahometans, then in possession of extensive dominions in the richest parts of the globe. The sudden rise of Venice was before his eyes, and almost happened in his own time. By applying to trade alone, she had acquired a power sufficient to cope with the stoutest of her enemies. Portugal, small as it was, merited quite another degree of respect; but poverty, ignorance, pride, and idleness prevailed among the poor people; even agriculture itself was in a manner abandoned since the expulsion of the Moors.

Prince Henry, from his early years, had been passionately addicted to the study of what is generally known by the name of the *mathematics*, that

is, geometry, astronomy, and consequently arithmetic. He was of a liberal turn of mind, devoid of superstition, haughtiness, or passion; the Arab and the Jew were admitted to him with great freedom, as the only masters who were capable of instructing him in those sciences. It was in vain to attempt to rival Venice in possession of the Mediterranean trade: no other way remained but to open the commerce to India by the Atlantic Ocean, by sailing round the point of Africa to the market of spices in India. Full of this thought, he retired to a country palace, and there dedicated the whole of his time to deliberate inquiry. The ignorance and prejudices of the age were altogether against him. The only geography then known was that of the poets. It was the opinion of the Portuguese, that the regions within the tropics were totally uninhabited, scorched by eternal sun-beams, while boiling oceans washed these burning coasts; and, therefore, they concluded, that every attempt to explore them was little better than downright madness, and a braving, or tempting, of Providence.

But, on the other hand, he found great materials to comfort him, and to make him persist in his resolution. For Greek history, to which he then had access, had recorded two instances, which shewed that the voyage was not only possible, but that it had been actually performed, first by the Phœnicians, under Necho king of Egypt, then by Eudoxus, during the time of Ptolemy Lathyrus, who, after doubling the southern Cape of Africa, arrived in safety at Cadiz. Hanno, too, had sailed from Carthage through the Straits, and reached to 25° of north

north latitude in the Atlantic Ocean. In more modern times, even in the preceding century, Mac-ham, an Englishman, returning from a voyage on the west coast of Africa, was shipwrecked on the island of Madeira, together with a woman whom he tenderly loved. After her death he became weary of solitude; and having constructed a bark, or canoe, with which he paddled over to the opposite coast, he was taken by the natives, and presented to the Caliph as a curiosity. And the Normans of Dieppe had, as a company, traded in 1364, not fourscore years from prince Henry's time, as far as Sierra de Leona, only 7° from the Line.

The prince's humanity to his Moorish prisoners had likewise been rewarded by substantial information; they reported that some of their countrymen of the kingdom of Sus had advanced far into the desert, carrying their water and provisions along with them on camels; that, after many days travel, they came to mines of salt, and, having loaded their cargoes, they proceeded till they came within the limits of the rains; there they found large and populous towns, inhabited by a people totally black and woolly-headed, who reported that there were many countries even beyond them, occupied by numerous and warlike tribes. To complete all, Don Pedro, Henry's brother, returning from Venice, brought along with him from that city a map, on which the whole coast of the Atlantic Ocean was distinctly traced, and the southern extremity of Africa was represented to be a cape surrounded with the sea, which joined with the Indian Ocean.

No sooner was the prince thus satisfied of the possibility of a passage to India round Africa, than he set about constructing the necessary instruments for navigation. He corrected the solar tables of the Arabs, and made some alterations in the astrolabe: For, strange to tell! the quadrant was not then known in Portugal, though, a hundred years before, Ulughbeg had measured the sun's height at Samarc and in Persia, with a quadrant of about 400 feet radius, the largest ever constructed, if, indeed, the size of this be not exaggerated.

Henry, who, by his liberality and affability, had drawn together the most learned mathematicians and ablest pilots of the age, now proposed to reduce his speculations to practice. Many ships had failed in the course of his disquisitions, and ten years had now elapsed before the prince, after all his encouragement, could induce the captains to proceed farther than Cape Non, or, thirty leagues further, to Cape Bojador. To this their courage held good; after which, the fear of fiery oceans reviving in their minds, they returned exceedingly satisfied with their own perseverance and abilities. Henry, though greatly hurt at this behaviour, dissembled the low opinion which he had formed of both. He contented himself with proposing to them different reasons and rewards; and urged them to repeat their voyages, which, however, constantly ended in the same disappointment. And it is probable a much longer time might have been spent in these miscarriages, had not accident, or rather providence, stepped in to his assistance.

John Gonfalez and Trifan Vaz, two gentlemen of his bed-chamber, seeing the impression this behaviour had made on the prince, and having obtained a small ship from him, resolved to double Cape Bojador, and discover the coast beyond it. Whether the fiery oceans might not have presented themselves to these gentlemen, I know not; but a violent storm forced them to sea. After being tossed about in perpetual fear of shipwreck for several days, they at last landed on a small island, which they called Port Santo. These two navigators possessed the true spirit of discovery. Far from giving themselves up for lost in a new world, or content with what they had already done, they set about making the most diligent observation of every thing remarkable in this small spot. The island itself was barren; but, examining the horizon all around, they observed a black fixed spot there, which never either changed its place or dimensions. Satisfied, therefore, that this was land, they returned to the Infant with the news of this double discovery.

Three vessels were speedily equipped by the prince; two of them given to Vaz and Arco, and the third to Bartholomew Perestrelo, gentleman of the bed-chamber to Don John his brother. These adventurers were far from disappointing his expectations; they arrived at Port Santo, and proceeded to the fixed spot, which they found to be the island of Madeira, wholly covered with wood; an island that has ever since been of the greatest use to the trade of both Indies, and which has remained to the crown of Portugal, after the greatest part of their other conquests in the east are lost. John I.

was now dead, and Edward had succeeded him. The infant Henry, however, still continued the pursuit of his discoveries with the greatest ardour.

Giles D'Anez, stimulated by the success of the last adventures, put to sea with a resolution to double Cape Bojador close in shore, so as to make his voyage a foundation for pushing farther the discovery; and, being lucky in good weather, he fairly doubled the Cape; and, continuing some leagues farther into the bay to the south of it, he returned with the same good fortune to Portugal, after having found the ocean equally as navigable on the other side as on this; and that there was no foundation for those monstrous appearances or difficulties mariners till now had expected to find there.

The successful expedition round Cape Bojador being soon spread abroad through Europe, excited a spirit of adventure in all foreigners; the most capable of whom resorted immediately to prince Henry, from their different countries, which further increased the spirit of the Portuguese, already raised to a very great height. But there still was a party of men, who, not susceptible of great actions themselves, dedicated their time with some success to criticising the enterprises of others. These blamed prince Henry, because, when Portugal was exhausted both of men and money by a necessary war in Africa, he should have chosen that very time to launch out into expences and vain discoveries of countries, in an immense ocean, which must be useless, because incapable of cultivation. And though they did not advance, as formerly, that the ocean was boiling among burning sands, they still thought themselves

themselves authorised to assert, that these countries must, from their situation under the sun, be so hot as to turn all the discoverers black, and also to destroy all vegetation. Futile as these reasons were, at another time they would have been sufficient to have blasted all the designs of prince Henry, had they made half the impression upon the king that they did upon the minds of the people. Portugal was then only *growing* to a pitch of heroism which it soon after arrived, their spirit being continually fostered by a long succession of wise, brave, and well-informed princes.

Edward, the reigning prince, disdained to give any answer to such objections, otherwise than by doubling his respect and attention for his uncle Henry. To encourage him still further, he conferred upon him for life the sovereignty of Madeira, Port Santo, and all the discoveries he should make on the coast of Africa; and the spiritual jurisdiction of the island of Madeira, upon his new Order of Christ, for ever.

These voyages of discovery were constantly persevered in: Nugno Tristan doubled Cape Blanco, and came to a small river, which, from their finding gold in the hands of the natives, was afterwards called *Rio del Oro*; and here a fort was afterwards built by the Portuguese, called *Arguim*. I would not, however, have it supposed, that gold is the produce of any place in the latitude of Cape Blanco. It was brought here from the black nations, far to the southward, to purchase salt from the mines which are in this desert near the Cape. The sight of gold, better than any argument, served to calm the fears,
and

and overcome the scruples, of those who hitherto had been adversaries to these discoveries.

In the year 1445, Denis Fernandes first discovered the great river Senega, the northern banks of which are inhabited by Asenagi Moors, whose colour is tawny, while the southern, or opposite banks, belong to the Jaloffes, or Negro nation, the chief market for the gum-arabic. Passing this river he discovered Cape Verde; and, to his inexpressible satisfaction, though now in the midst of the torrid zone, he found the country abounded with large rivers, and with the most luxuriant verdure. He found a civil war in the nation of Jaloffes. Bemoy, a prince of that nation, had, in a minority, intruded himself into the throne of his brothers, (to whom he was but half blood), by the address of his mother. The eldest of the three brothers preserved the shadow of government, and seemed to favour the usurpation. Bemoy had improved that interval by cultivating the Portuguese friendship to the uttermost. He promised every thing; a place to build their city on the continent, which the king very much desired; and to be a convert to Christianity, the only thing the king wished still more. His eldest brother dying, the king was briskly pressed by the two younger, and steadily supported by the Portuguese, from whom he had borrowed large sums; but still appearing to trifle with the day of his conversion, and the day of his payment, the king ordered the Portuguese to withdraw from his country, and leave him to his fortune. The loss of a battle with his brothers soon reduced him to the necessity of flying across the deserts to Arguim, and
thence

thence to Portugal, with a number of his followers. He was received by the king of Portugal with all the honours due to a sovereign prince, and baptised at Lisbon, the king and queen being his sponsors.

Great festivals and illuminations were made at this acquisition to Christianity; and Bemoy appeared at those festivals as the greatest ornament of them, performing feats of horsemanship never before practised in Portugal. The modesty and propriety of his conversation and behaviour in private, and the great dignity and eloquence which he displayed in public, began to give the Portuguese a very different idea of his clan from that which they had formerly entertained.

In the mean time the king went rapidly on with the preparations that were to establish Bemoy in his kingdom; and the festivals were no sooner terminated, than Bemoy found a large army and fleet ready to sail with him, the command of which, unhappily for him and the expedition, was given to Tristan d'Acugna, a soldier of great experience and courage, but proud, passionate, and cruel; the disagreeable name of Bifagudo * had already been fixed upon him by his countrymen.

The fleet performed the voyage, and the troops landed happily. They were, by their number and valour, far from any apprehension of opposition. The general began immediately to lay the foundation of a fort, without having sufficiently attended to its unhealthy situation. The spot which was chosen being low and marshy, fevers began early
to

* The literal translation of this is, *doubly sharp*, or *sharp to a fault*; a character he had gained in Portugal.

to make havock among his men, and the work of course went on proportionably slower. The murmurs of the army against his obstinacy in adhering to the choice of this place, and his fear that he himself should be left alone governor of it, made D'Acugna desperate; when one day, taking his pleasure on board a ship, and having had some words with Bemoy, he stabbed him with his dagger to the heart, so that he fell dead without uttering a word. The fort was abandoned, and the army returned to Portugal, after having cost little less than all prince Henry's discoveries together had done.

But Heaven rewarded the wisdom of the king by a discovery, the consequences of which more than overpaid him, in his mind, for his loss. Prince Henry's principal view was to discover the way to India by the southern Cape of Africa; but this as yet was not known to be possible. In order to remedy a disappointment, if any such happened in this sea-voyage, another was attempted by land. We have seen that the common track for the Indian trade was from the east to the west sea, through the desert, the whole breadth of Africa. Prince Henry had projected a route parallel to this to the southward, through a Christian country: For it had been long reported by the Christians from Jerusalem, that a number of monks resorted thither, subjects of a Christian prince in the very heart of Africa, whose dominions were said to reach from the east to the west sea. Several of these monks had been met at Alexandria, whose patriarch had the sole right to send a metropolitan into that country. These facts, though often known, had been as often
forgot

forgot by the western Christians. Marco Paulo *, a Venetian traveller, had much confused the story, by saying he had met, in his travels through Tartary, with this prince, who they all agreed was a priest, and was called Joannes Presbyter Prete Janni, or Prester John.

The king of Portugal, therefore, chose Peter Covillan and Alphonso de Paiva for his ambassadors. Covillan was a man qualified for the undertaking. He had several times been employed by the late king in very delicate affairs, out of which he extricated himself with the great credit by his address and secrecy. He was, besides this, in the vigour of his age, bold, active, and perfectly master of all sorts of arms; modest and cheerful in conversation, and, what crowned all, had happily a great readiness in acquiring languages, which enabled him to explain himself wherever he went, without an interpreter; an advantage to which, above all others, we are to ascribe the success of such a journey.

It was at the court of Bemoy that the first certain account of the existence of this Christian prince was procured. This people, on the west coast of Africa, reported, that, inland to the eastward, were many powerful nations and cities, governed by princes totally independent of each other; that the easternmost of these princes was called prince of the Mo-faical people, who were neither Pagans nor Idolaters, but professed a religion compounded of the Christian and Jewish.

It seems plain that this intelligence must have been brought by the caravans; or, indeed, the case may have been that the language of the Negroes had,

* See Marco Paulo's Travels into Tartary.

had, of old, been a dialect of Abyssinian. The black Ethiopians above Thebes are reported to have bestowed much care upon letters; and they certainly reformed the hieroglyphics, and probably invented the Syllabic alphabet, which we know is used in Abyssinia to this day, and which was probably the first among the nations. Be that as it will, the various names which the Senega went by were all Abyssinian words. Senega comes from *Afenagi*, which is Abyssinian, and signifies *carriers*, or *caravans*, *Dengui*, a *stone*, or *rock*; *Angueah*, a tree of that name; *Anzo*, a *crocodile*; and, at the same time, all these are names of Abyssinian rivers.

It was at Benin, another Negro country, that the king again received a confirmation of the existence of a Christian prince, who was said to inhabit the heart of Africa to the south-east of this state. The people of Benin reported him to be a prince exceedingly powerful; that his name was *Ogané*, and his kingdom about 250 leagues to the eastward. They added, that the kings of Benin received from him a brass cross and a staff as their investiture. It should seem that this *Ogané* is but a corruption of *Jani*, or *Jahoi*, which title the eastern Christians had given to the king of Abyssinia. But it is very difficult to account for the knowledge of Abyssinia in the kingdom of Benin, not only on account of the distance, but likewise, because several of the most savage nations of the world, the *Galla* and *Shangalla*, occupy the intervening space.

The court of Abyssinia, as we shall see afterwards, did, indeed, then reside in *Shoa*, the south-east extremity of the kingdom, and, by its power

and influence, probably might have pushed its dominion through these barbarians, down to the neighbourhood of Benin on the western ocean. But all this I must confess to be a simple conjecture of mine, of which, in the country itself, I never found the smallest confirmation.

Amha Yafous (prince of Shoa) being at court, on a visit to the king at Gondar, in the year 1770 and 1771, and the strictest friendship subsisting between us, every endeavour possible was used on my part to examine this affair to the bottom. A number of letters were written, and messengers sent; and, at this prince's desire, his father directed, that all the records of government should be consulted to satisfy me. But never any thing occurred which gave room to imagine the prince of Shoa had ever been sovereign of Benin, nor was the western ocean, or that state, known to them in my time. Yet the country alluded to could be no other than Abyssinia; and, indeed, the crooked staff, as well as the cross, corroborate this opinion, unless the whole was an invention of the Negroes, to flatter the king of Portugal.

That prince was resolved no longer to delay the discovery of the markets of the spice-trade in India, and the passage over land, through Abyssinia, to the eastern ocean. He, therefore, as has been before said, dispatched Covillan and de Paiva to Alexandria, with the necessary letters and credit. They had likewise a map, or chart, given them, made under the direction of prince Henry, which they were to correct, or to confirm, according as it needed. They were to enquire what were the principal

principal markets for the spice, and particularly the pepper-trade in India; and what were the different channels by which this was conveyed to Europe; whence came the gold and silver, the medium of this trade; and, above all, they were to inform themselves distinctly, whether it was possible to arrive in India by sailing round the southern promontory of Africa.

From Alexandria these two travellers proceeded to Cairo, thence to Suez, the port on the bottom of the Red Sea, where joining a caravan of western Moors, they continued their route to Aden, a rich trading town, without the Straits of Babel-mandeb. Here they separated: Covillan set sail for India, De Paiva for Suakem, a small trading town and island in Barbaria, or Barabra of the ancients. What other circumstances occurred we know not, only that De Paiva, attempting his journey this way, lost his life, and was never more heard of.

Covillan, more fortunate, passed over to Calicut and Goa in India; then crossed the Indian Ocean to Sofala, to inspect the mines; then he returned to Aden, and so to Cairo, where he expected to meet his companion De Paiva; but here he heard of his death. However, he was there met by two Jews with letters from the king of Abyssinia, the one called Abraham, the other Joseph. Abraham he sent back with letters, but took Joseph along with him again to Aden, and thence they both proceeded to Ormus in the Persian Gulf. Here they separated, and the Jew returned home by the caravans that pass along the desert to Aleppo. Covillan,

villan, now solely intent upon the discovery of Abyssinia, returned to Aden, and, crossing the Straits of Babelmandeb, landed in the dominions of that prince, whose name was Alexander, and whom he found at the head of his army, levying contributions upon his rebellious subjects. Alexander received him kindly, but rather from motives of curiosity than from any expectation of advantage which would result from his embassy. He took Covillan along with him to Shoa, where the court then resided.

Covillan returned no more to Europe. A cruel policy of Abyssinia makes this a favour constantly denied to strangers. He married, and obtained large possessions; continued greatly in the favour of several succeeding princes, and was preferred to the principal offices, in which, there is no doubt, he appeared with all the advantage a polished and instructed mind has over an ignorant and barbarous one. Frequent dispatches from him came to the king of Portugal, who, on his part, spared no expence to keep open the correspondence. In his journal, Covillan described the several ports in India which he had seen; the temper and disposition of the princes; the situation and riches of the mines of Sofala: He reported that the country was very populous, full of cities both powerful and rich; and he exhorted the king to pursue, with unremitting vigour, the passage round Africa, which he declared to be attended with very little danger; and that the Cape itself was well known in India. He accompanied this description with a chart, or map, which he had received from the hands of a Moor

Moor in India, where the Cape, and cities all around the coast, were exactly represented.

Upon this intelligence the king fitted out three ships under Bartholomew Dias, who had orders to inquire after the king of Abyssinia on the western ocean. Dias passed on to lat. $24\frac{1}{2}$ deg. south, and there set up the arms of the king of Portugal in token of possession. He then sailed for the harbour of the Herdsmen, so called from the multitude of cows seen on land; and, as it should seem, not knowing whither he was going, came to a river which he called *Del Infante*, from the captain's name that first discovered it, having, without dreaming of it, passed that formidable Cape, the object so much desired by the Portuguese. Here he was tossed for many days by violent storms as he came near land, being more and more in the course of variable winds, but, obstinately persisting to discover the coast, he at last came within sight of the Cape, which he called the *Cape of Tempests*, from the rough treatment his vessel had met in her passage round it.

The great end was now obtained. Dias and his companions had really suffered much, and, upon their return, they did not fail to do ample justice to their own bravery and perseverance; in doing this, they had conjured up so many storms and dreadful fights, that, all the remaining life of king John, there was no more talk but of this Cape: Only the king, to hinder a bad omen, instead of the Cape of Tempests, ordered it to be called the Cape of Good Hope.

Although

Although the discovery now was made, there were not wanting a considerable number of people of the greatest consequence who were for abandoning it altogether; one of their reasons was curious and what, if their behaviour afterwards had not been beyond all instance heroic, would have led us to imagine their spirit of religion and conquest had both cooled since the days of prince Henry. They were afraid, lest, after having discovered a passage to India, the depriving the Moorish states of their revenues from the spice-trade, should unite these powers to their destruction. Now, to destroy their revenues effectually, and therefore ruin their power, was the very motive which set prince Henry upon the discovery, as worthy the Grand Master of the Order of Christ; an order founded in the blood of unbelievers, and devoted particularly to the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

Don Emmanuel, then king, having no such apprehensions, resolved to abide the consequences of a measure the most arduous ever undertaken by any nation, and which, though it had cost a great deal of time and expence, had yet succeeded beyond their utmost expectations. It was not till after long deliberation that he fixed upon Vasques de Gama, a man of the first distinction, remarkable for courage and great presence of mind. Before his departure, the king put into his hands the journal of Peter Covillan, with his chart, and letters of credit to all the princes in India of whom he had obtained any knowledge.

The behaviour of Vasques de Gama, at parting, was far from being characteristic of the fol-

dier or great man: his processions and tapers favoured much more of the ostentatious devotion of a bigotted little-minded priest, and was much more calculated to depress the spirits of his soldiers, than to encourage them to the service they were then about to do for their country. It served only to revive in their minds the hardships that Dias had met off the Terrible Cape, and persuade them there was in their expedition much more danger than glory. I would not be understood as meaning to condemn all acts of devotion before military expeditions, but would have them always short, ordinary, and uniform. Every thing further inspires in weak minds a sense of danger, and makes them despond upon any serious appearance of difficulty.

July 4th, 1497, Vasques, with his small fleet, sailed from Lisbon; and, as the art of navigation was considerably improved, he stood out to sea till he had made the Canary Islands, and then those of Cape de Verde, where he anchored, took in water and other refreshments. After which he was four months struggling with contrary winds and blowing weather, and at last obliged, through perfect fatigue, to run into a large bay called *St. Helena**, in lat. 32° 32' south. The inhabitants of this bay were black, of low stature, and their language not understood, though it afterwards was found to be the same with that of the Cape. They were cloathed with skins of antelopes, which abounded in the country, since known to be that of the Hottentots; their

* On the west side of the peninsula on the Atlantic.

their arms were the horns and bones of beasts and fishes, for they had no knowledge of iron.

The Portuguese were unacquainted with the trade-winds in those southern latitudes; and Vasques had departed for India, in a most unfavourable season of the year. The 16th of November they sailed for the Cape with a south-west wind; but that very day, the weather changing, a violent storm came on, which continued increasing; so, although on the 18th they discovered their long-desired Cape, they did not dare or attempt to pass it. Then it was seen how much stronger the impressions were that Dias had left imprinted in their minds, than those of duty, obedience, and resignation, which they had so pompously vowed at the chapel, or hermitage. All the crew mutinied, and refused to pass farther; and it was not the common sailors only; the pilots and masters were at their head. Vasques, satisfied in his mind that there was nothing extraordinary in the danger, persevered to pass the Cape in spite of all difficulties; and the officers, animated with the same ardour, seized the most mutinous of their masters and pilots, and confined them close below in heavy irons.

Vasques himself, taking hold of the rudder, continued to steer the ship with his own hand, and stood out to sea, to the astonishment of the bravest seaman on board. The storm lasted two days, without having in the least shaken the resolution of the admiral, who, on the 20th of November, saw his constancy rewarded by doubling that Cape, which he did, as it were, in triumph, sounding his trumpets, beating his drums, and permitting to his peo-

ple all forts of pastimes which might banish from their minds former apprehensions, and induce them to agree with him, that the point had very aptly been called the Cape of Good Hope.

On the 25th they anchored in a creek called *Angra de Saint Blaze*. Soon after their arrival there appeared a number of the inhabitants on the mountains, and on the shore. The general, fearing some surprize, landed his men armed. But, first, he ordered small brass bells, and other trinkets, to be thrown out of the boats on shore, which the blacks greedily took up, and ventured so near as to take one of them out of the general's own hand. Upon his landing, he was welcomed with the sound of flutes and singing. Vasques, on his part, ordered his trumpets to sound, and his men to dance round them.

All along from St. Blaze, for more than sixty leagues, they found the coast remarkably pleasant, full of high and fair trees. On Christmas day they made land, and entered a river which they called *the river of the kings*; and all the distance between this and St. Blaze they named *Terra de Natal*. The weather being mild, they took to their boats to row along the shore, on which were observed both men and women of a large stature, but who seemed to be of quiet and civil behaviour. The general ordered Martin Alonzo, who spoke several languages of the Negroes, to land; and he was so well received by the chief, or king, that the admiral sent him several trifles, with which he was wonderfully pleased, and offered, in return, any thing he wanted of the produce of his country.

On the 15th of January, in the year 1498, having taken in plenty of water, which the Negroes, of their own accord, helped them to put on board, they left this civil nation, steering past a length of coast terminated by a Cape called the *Cape of Currents*. There the coast of Natal ends, and that of Sofala begins, to the northward of the Cape. At this place, Gama from the south joined Covillan's track from the north, and these two Portuguese had completely made the circuit of Africa.



ISCANDER, OR ALEXANDER.

From 1478 to 1495.

Islander declares War with Adel—Good Conduct of the King—Betrayed and murdered by Za Saluce.

AS soon as the king Bæda Mariam was dead, the history of Abyssinia informs us, that a tumultuous meeting of the nobles brought from the mountain of Geshen the queen Romana, with her son Iscander, who upon his arrival was crowned without any opposition.

It is to be observed in the Abyssinian annals, that very frequent minorities happen. A queen-mother, or regent, with two or three of the greatest interest at court, are, during the minority, in possession of the king's person, and govern in his name. The transactions of this minority, too, are as carefully inserted in the annals of the kingdom as any other

part of the subsequent government, but as the whole of these minorities are but one continued chain of quarrels, plots, and treachery, as soon as the king comes of age, the greatest part of this reign of his ministers is cancelled, as being the acts of subjects, and not worthy to be inserted in their histories; which they entitle *Kebra Ze Negust*, the greatness or achievements of their kings. This, however political in itself, is a great disadvantage to history, by concealing from posterity the first cause of the most important transactions.

For several years after Iscander ascended the throne, the queen his mother, together with the Acab Saat, Tesfo Georgis, and Betwudet Amdu, governed the kingdom despotically under the name of the young king. Accordingly, after some years sufferance, a conspiracy was formed, at the head of which were two men of great power, Abba, Amdu and Abba Hafabo, but the conspirators proving unsuccessful, some of them were imprisoned, some put to death, and others banished to unwholesome places, there to perish with hunger and fevers.

The king from his early age had shewn a passionate desire for a war with Adel, and that prince, whose country had been so often desolated by the Abyssinian armies, omitted no opportunity of creating an interest at that court, that should keep things in a quiet state. In this, however, he was much interrupted at present by a neighbouring chief of Arar, named Maffudi. This man, exceedingly brave, capable of enduring the greatest hardships, and a very great bigot to the Mahometan religion, had made a vow, that, every
Lent,

Lent, he would spend the whole forty days in some part of the Abyssinian kingdom; and to this purpose he had raised, at his own expence, a small body of veteran troops, whom he inspired with the same spirit and resolution. Sometimes he fell on one part of the frontier, sometimes upon another; slaying, without mercy, all that made resistance, and driving off whole villages of men, women, and children, whom he sent into Arabia, or India, to be sold as slaves.

It was a matter of great difficulty for the king of Adel to persuade the Abyssinians that Maffudi acted without his instigation. The young king was one who could not distinguish Adel from Arar, or Mahomet's army from Maffudi's. He bore with very great impatience the excesses every year committed by the latter; but he was over-ruled by his nobility at home, and his thoughts turned as much as possible to hunting, to which he willingly gave himself up; and, tho' but fifteen years of age, was the person, in all Abyssinia, most dexterous at managing his arms. At last, being arrived at the age of seventeen, and returning from having observed a very successful expedition made by Maffudi against his territories, he ordered Za Saluce, his first minister, commander in chief, and governor of Ambara, to raise the whole forces to the southward, while he himself collected the nobility in Angot and Tigre. With those, as soon as the rainy season was over, he descended into the kingdom of Adel.

The king of Adel had been forced into this war, yet, like a wise prince, he was not unprepared for it.

it. He had advanced directly towards the king, but had not passed his frontiers. Some inhabitants of a village called *Arno*, all Mahometans, but tributary to the king of Abyffinia, had murdered the governor the king had fet over them. Ifcander marched directly to deftroy it, which he had no fooner accomplifhed, than the Moorifh army prefented itfelf. The battle was maintained obftinately on both fides, till the troops under Za Saluce withdrew in the heat of the engagement, leaving the king in the midft of his enemies. This treason, however, feemed to have infpired the fmall army that remained with new courage, fo that the day was as yet dubious, when Ifcander, being engaged in a narrow pafs, and feeing himfelf preffed by a Moor who bore in his hand the green ftandard of Mahomet, turned fuddenly upon him, and flew him with a javelin; and, having wrefted the colours from him as he was falling, he, with the point of the fpear that bore the enfign, ftuck the king of Adel's fon dead to the ground, which immediately caufed the Moors to retreat.

The young prince was too prudent to follow this victory in the ftate the army then was; for that of Adel, though it had retreated, did not difperfe. Za Saluce was returning by long marches to Amhara, exciting all thofe in his way to revolt; and it was high time, therefore, for the king to follow him. But, unequal as he was in ftrength to the Moors, he could not reconcile it with his own honour to leave their army mafters of the field. He, therefore, firft confulted the principal officers of his troops, then harangued his men, which, the
historian

historian says, he did in the most pathetic and masterly manner; so that, with one voice, they desired instantly to be led to the Moors. The king is said to have ranged his little army in a manner that astonished the oldest officers. He then sent a defiance to the Moors, by several prisoners whom he released. They, however, more desirous to keep him from ravaging the country than to fight another battle, continued quiet in their tents; and the king, after remaining on the field till near noon, drew off his troops in the presence of his enemy, making a retreat which would not have been unworthy of the hero whose name he bore.

The king, in his return to Shoa, left his troops, which was the northern army, in the northern provinces, as he passed; so that he came to Shoa with a very small retinue, hearing that Za Saluce had gone to Amhara. This traitor, however, had left his creatures behind him, after instructing them what they were to do. Accordingly, the second day after Iscander's arrival in Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, they set upon him, during the night, in a small house in Aylo Median, and murdered him while he was sleeping. They concealed his body for some days in a mill, but Taka Christos, and some others of the king's friends, took up the corpse and exposed it to the people, who, with one accord, proclaimed Andreas, son of Iscander, king; and Za Saluce and his adherents, traitors.

In the mean time, Za Saluce, far from finding the encouragement he expected in Amhara, was, upon his first appearance, set upon by the nobility of that province; and, being deserted by his troops, he

was taken prisoner; his eyes were put out, and, being mounted on an afs, he was carried amidst the curses of the people through the provinces of Amhara and Shoa.

Iscander was succeeded by his son Andreas, or Amda Sion, an infant, who reigned seven months only.

A wonderful confusion seems to be introduced at this time into history, by the Portuguese writers. Iscander is said to die in the 1490. He began, as they say, to reign in 1475, and this is confirmed by Ludolf; and, on all hands, it is allowed he reigned 17 years, which would have brought the last year of his reign to 1492. It seems also to be agreed by the generality of them, that Covillan saw and conversed with this prince, Iscander, some time before his death: this he very well might have done, if that prince lived to the 1492, and Peter Covillan came into Abyffinia in 1490, as Galvan says in his father's memoirs. But then Tellez informs us expressly, that Iscander was dead six months before the arrival of Peter Covillan in that country: If Peter Covillan arrived six months after the death of Iscander, it must have been in the end of his son's reign, Amda Sion, who was an infant, and reigned only seven months.

Alvarez omits this king, Amda Sion, altogether, and so does Tellez; and there is a heap of mistakes here that shew these Portuguese historians paid very little attention to the chronology of these reigns. They call Alexander the father of Naod, when he was really but his brother; and Helena, they say, was David's mother, when, in fact, she was his grand-

grandmother, or rather his grandfather's wife ; for Helena, who was Iteghé in the time of David III. had never either son or daughter. So that if I differ, as in fact I do, four years, or thereabout, in this account, I do not think in those remote times, when the language and manner of accounting was so little known to these strangers, that I, therefore should reject my own account and servilely adopt theirs, and the more so, because, as we shall see in its proper place, by the examination and comparison made by help of an eclipse of the sun in the 13th year of Claudius's reign in the 1553, and counting from that downwards to my arrival in Abyffinia, and backwards to Iscander, that prince must have begun his reign in 1478, and reigning 17 years, did not die till the year 1495 and therefore must have seen Peter Covillan, and conversed with him, if he had arrived in Abyffinia so early as the 1490.



N A O D.

From 1495 to 1508.

Wise Conduct of the King—Prepares for a War with the Moors—Concludes an honourable Peace with Adel.

AFTER the unfortunate death of the young king Alexander, the people in general, wearied of minorities, unanimously chose Naod for their king. He was Alexander's younger brother, the difference
of

of ages being but one year, though he was not by the same mother, but by the king's second wife Calliope. He was born at a town called Gabargué, the day the royal army was cut off in his father's time, when both the Betwudets perished. From this circumstance, the Empress Helena and her party had used some underhand means to set him aside as unfortunate, and in his place to put Anquo Israel, Bæda Mariam's youngest son, that they might govern him and the kingdom during his non-age. But Taka Christos, their man of confidence, being, on his first declaration of such intentions, cut off by the army in Dawaro, Naod was immediately proclaimed, and brought from the mountain of Geshen.

Although Naod was in the prime of life, and vigorous both in body and mind, yet such were the circumstances of the kingdom at his accession, that it seemed a task too arduous for any one man. The continual intrigues of the empress, the quantity of Mahometan gold which was circulating on every occasion throughout the court, the little success the army had in Adel, as also the treachery of Za Saluce, and the untimely end of the young prince, who seemed to promise a remedy to the misfortunes, had so disunited the principal people in the government, that there did not seem a sufficient number of men worthy of trust to assist the king with their councils, or fill, with any degree of dignity, the places that were vacant.

Naod was no sooner seated on the throne than he published a very general and comprehensive amnesty. By proclamation he declared, " That any
" person

“ person who should upbraid another with being a
 “ party in the misfortunes of past times, or say
 “ that he had been privy to this or to that conspi-
 “ racy, or had been a favourite of the empress, or
 “ a partizan of Za Saluce, or had received bribes
 “ from the Moors, should, without delay, be put
 “ to death.” This proclamation had the very best
 effect, as it quieted the mind of every guilty per-
 son when he saw the king, from whom he feared
 an inquiry, cutting off all possible means by which
 it could be procured against him. Andreas a monk,
 a man of quality, and of very great conse-
 quence in that country, a relation of the king by
 his mother, having affected to talk lightly of the
 proclamation, the king sent for him, and ordered
 the tip of his tongue to be cut off in his presence.
 This man, whose fault seems only to have been in
 his tongue, and of whom a very great character is
 given, lived in the succeeding reign to give the king
 a very distinguished proof of his attachment to his
 family, and love of his country.

Naod having thus prudently quieted disturbances
 at home, turned his thoughts to the war with Mas-
 fudi; for the king of Adel himself had made his
 peace through mediation of the empress Helena;
 and this king, more politic than Alexander his bro-
 ther, was willing to dissemble with the king of
 Adel, that he might fight his two adversaries singly:
 He, therefore, prepared a smaller army than was
 usual for the king to head, without suffering a Moor
 of any kind to serve in it.

It was known to a day when Maffudi was to enter upon his expeditions against Abyffinia. For near thirty years he had begun to burn the churches, and drive off the people and cattle on the first day of Lent; and, as Lent advanced, he with his army penetrated farther up the country. The Abyffinians are the strictest people in the world in keeping fasts. They are so austere that they taste no sort of animal food, nor butter, eggs, oil, or wine. They will not, though ever so thirsty, drink a cup of water till six o'clock in the evening, and then are contented, perhaps, with dry or four leaven bread, the best of them only making use of honey; by which means they become so weak as to be unable to bear any fatigue. This was Maffudi's reason for invading the country in Lent, at which time scarce a Christian, through fasting, was able to bear arms.

Naod, like a wise prince who had gained the confidence of his army, would not carry with him any man who did not, for that time, live in the same free and full manner he was used to do in festivals. He himself set the example; and Andreas the monk, after taking upon himself a vow of a whole year's fasting for the success of the army, declared to them, that there was more merit in saving one Christian village from slavery and turning Mahometan, than in fasting their whole lives.

The king then marched against Maffudi; and having taken very strong ground, as if afraid of his army's weakness, the Moors, contrary to advice of their leader, attacked the king's camp in the most careless and presumptuous manner. They had no sooner entered, however, by ways left open

on purpose for them, than they found the king's army in order to receive them, and were so rudely attacked that most of those who had penetrated into the camp were left dead upon the spot. The king continued the pursuit with his troops, retook all the prisoners and cattle which Maffudi was driving away, and advanced towards the frontiers of Adel, where ambassadors met him, hoping, on the part of the king, that his intention was not to violate the treaty of peace.

To this the king answered, That, so far from it, he would confirm the peace with him, but with this condition, that they must deliver up to him all the Abyssinians that were to be found in their country taken by Maffudi in his last expedition, adding, that he would stay fifteen days there to expect his answer. The king of Adel, desirous of peace, and not a little terrified at the disaster of Maffudi, hitherto reckoned invincible, gathered together all the slaves as soon as possible, and returned them to the king.

Naod having now, by his courage and prudence, freed himself from fear of a foreign war, returned home, and set himself like a wise prince to the reforming of the abuses that prevailed everywhere among his people, and to the cultivation of the arts of peace. He died a natural death, after having reigned 13 years.

D A V I D. III.

From 1508 to 1540.

David, an Infant, succeeds—Queen sends Matthew Ambassador to Portugal—David takes the Field—Defeat of the Moors—Arrival of an Embassy from Portugal—Disastrous War with Adel.

THE vigorous reign of Naod had at least suspended the fate of the whole empire; and, had it not been that they still persisted in that ruinous and dangerous measure of following minority with minority, by the election of children to the throne, it is probable this kingdom would have escaped the greatest part of those dismal calamities that fell upon it in the sequel. But the Iteghé Helena, and the Abuna Marcos, (now become her creature) had interest enough, notwithstanding the apparent necessities of the times, to place David son of Naod upon the throne, a child of eleven years old, that they might take upon themselves the government of the kingdom; whereas Anquo Israel (third son of Bæda Mariam) was of an age proper to govern, and whom they would have preferred to Naod for the same reason, merely because he was then a child.

Besides the desire of governing, another motive operated, which, however good in itself, was very criminal from the present circumstances. A peace with Adel was what the empress Helena constantly desired; for she could not see with indifference the
destruction

destruction of her own country, far less contribute to it. She was herself by origin a Moor, daughter of Mahomet, governor for the king in Dawaro; had been suspected, so early as her husband's time, of preferring the welfare of her own country to that of the kingdom of Abyssinia.

This princess, perfectly informed of the interests of both nations, seems, in her whole conduct, to have acted upon the most judicious and sensible principles. She knew the country of Adel to be, by situation and interest, perfectly commercial; that part of Africa, the opposite Arabia, and the peninsula of the Indies, were but three partners joined in one trade; they mutually consumed each others produce; they mutually contributed to export the joint produce of the three countries to distant parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa; which three continents then constituted the whole known world. When Adel was at peace with Abyssinia, then the latter became rich, from the gold, ivory, coffee, cattle, hides, and all manner of provision, procured by the former from every part of the mountainous tract above it. Trade flourished and plenty followed it. The merchants carried every species of goods to the most distant provinces in safety, equally to the advantage of Abyssinia and Adel. These advantages, so sensibly felt, were maintained by bribery, and a constant circulation of Mahometan gold in the court of Abyssinia; the kingdom, however, thus prospered. A war with Adel, on the contrary, had its origin in a violent desire of a barbarous people, such as the Abyssinians were, to put themselves in possession of riches

which their neighbours had gained by trade and industry.

She saw that, even in this the worst of cases, nothing utterly destructive could possibly happen to the Abyssinians; in their inroads into that country, they plundered the markets and got, at the risk of their lives, India stuffs of every kind, for which else they would have paid money. On the other hand, the people of Adel, when conquerors, acquired no stuffs, no manufactures, but the persons of the Abyssinians themselves, whom they carried into slavery, and sold in Arabia, and all parts of Asia, at immense profits. Next to gold they are the most agreeable and valuable merchandise in every part of the east; and these again, being chiefly the idle people who delighted in war, their absence promoted the more desirable event of peace.

In this state we see that war was but another species of commerce between the two countries; though peace was the most eligible state for them both; and this the empress Helena had constantly endeavoured to maintain, but could not succeed among a people fond of war, by any other means but by giving them a minor for their king, who was by the law of the land under her direction, as the country was, during his minority, under her regency.

Although this, the ordinary state of the empress's politics, had hitherto answered well between the kingdoms, when no other parties were engaged, the introduction of a third power, and its influence, totally changed that system. The Turks, an enemy

not yet known in any formidable line by the southern part of Africa, or Asia, now appeared under a form that made all those southern states tremble.

Selim, emperor of Constantinople, had defeated Canso el Gauri, Soldan of Egypt, and slain him in the field. After a second battle he had taken Cairo, the capital of that country; and, under the specious pretence of a violation of the law of nations, by Tomum Bey, the successor, who was said to have put his ambassadors to death, he had hanged that prince upon one of the principal gates of his own capital; and, by this execution, had totally destroyed the succession of the Mamalukes. Sinan Bascha, the great general and minister of Selim, in a very few months over-ran all the peninsula of Arabia, to the verge of the Indian Ocean.

These people, trained to war, Mahomet had inspired with enthusiasm, and led them to the conquest of the East. Trade and luxury had, after that, disarmed and reduced them to much the same situation as, in a former age, they had been found by Augustus Cæsar. Sinan Bascha, with a troop of veterans, had, by degrees extirpated the native princes of the country; those that resisted, by force; and those that submitted to him, by treachery; and in their place, in every principal town, he had substituted Turkish officers of confidence, strongly supported by troops of Janizaries, who knew no other government but martial law.

War had now changed its form entirely under these new conquerors. Muskets, and large trains of artillery, were introduced against javelins, lances, and arrows, the only arms then known in Arabia,

and in the opposite continent of Abyssinia. A large fleet, crowded with soldiers, and filled with military stores, the very name of which, as well as their destructive qualities, were till now unknown in these southern regions, were employed by the Turks to extend their conquest to India, where, though by the superior valour of the Portuguese they were constantly disappointed in their principal object, they nevertheless, in their passage outward and homeward, reinforced their several posts in Arabia, from which they looked for assistance and protection, had any enemy placed himself in their way, or a storm, or other unexpected misfortune, overtaken them in their return.

These Janizaries lived upon the very bowels of commerce. They had, indeed, for a shew of protecting it, established customhouses in their various ports; but they soon made it appear, that the end proposed by these was only to give them a more distinct knowledge who were the subjects from whom they could levy the most enormous extortions. Jidda, Zibid, and Mocha, the places of consequence nearest to Abyssinia on the Arabian shore, Suakem, a sea-port town on the very barriers of Abyssinia, in the immediate way of their caravan to Cairo, on the African side, were each under the command of a Turkish basha, and garrisoned by Turkish troops sent thither from Constantinople by the emperors Selim and Soliman, his successors.

The peaceable Arabian merchants, full of that good faith which successful commerce inspires, fled everywhere from the violence and injustice of these Turkish tyrants, and landed in safety their riches
and

and persons on the opposite shore of the kingdom of Adel. The trade from India, flying from the same enemy, took refuge in Adel among its own correspondents, the Moorish merchants, during the violent and impolitic tyranny that everywhere took place under this Turkish oppression.

Zeyla is a small island, on the very coast of Adel, opposite to Arabia Felix without the Straits of Babelmandeb, upon the entrance of the Indian Ocean. The Turks of Arabia, though they were blind to the cause, were sensible of the great influx of trade into the opposite kingdom. They took possession, therefore, of Zeyla, where they established what they call a customhouse, and by means of that post, and galleys, cruising in the narrow Straits, they laid the Indian trade to Adel under heavy contributions, that might, in some measure, indemnify them for the great desertion their violence and injustice had occasioned in Arabia.

This step threatened the very existence both of Adel and Abyssinia; and considering the vigorous government of the one, and the weak politics and prejudices of the other, it is more than probable the Turks would have subdued both Adel and Abyssinia, had they not, in India their chief object, met the Portuguese, strongly established, and governed by a succession of kings who had not in any age their equals, and seconded by officers and soldiers who, for discipline, courage, love to their country, and affection to their sovereign, were, perhaps, superior to any troops, or any set of individuals, that, as far as we can judge from history, have ever yet appeared in the world.

It was not now a time for a woman to reign, nor, which was the same thing, to place a child upon the throne. The empress Helena saw this distinctly; but her ambition made her prefer the love of reigning to the visible necessities and welfare of her country. She knew the progress and extent of the Portuguese power in India; and saw plainly there was no prospect, but in their assistance, at once to save both Abyssinia and Adel.

Peter Covillan, sent thither as ambassador by John king of Portugal, had, for two reigns, been detained in Abyssinia, with a constant refusal of leave to return. He was now become an object of curiosity rather than use. However, except his liberty, he had wanted nothing. The empress had married him nobly in the country; had given him large appointments, both as to profit and dignity. She now began to be sensible of the consequence of having with her a man of his abilities, who could open to her the method of corresponding effectually both with India and Portugal in their own language, to which, as well as to the persons to whom her letters were to be addressed, she was then an utter stranger.

She had about her court an Armenian merchant named Matthew, a person of great trust and discretion, who had been long accustomed to go to the several kingdoms of the East upon mercantile commissions for the king and for his nobles. He had been at Cairo, Jerusalem, Ormus, Ispahan, and in the East Indies on the coast of Malabar; both in places conquered by the Portuguese, and in those that yet held out under their native Pagan princes.

He

He was one of those factors which, as I have already said, are employed by the king and great men in Abyssinia to sell or barter, in the places above mentioned, such part of their revenue as are paid them in kind.

These men are chiefly Greeks, or Armenians, but the preference is always given to the latter. Both nations pay caratch, or capitation, to the Grand Signiors, (whose subjects they are) and both have, in consequence, passports, protections, and liberty to trade wherever they please throughout the empire, without being liable to those insults and extortions from the Turkish officers that other strangers are.

The Armenians, of all the people in the East, are those most remarkable for their patience and sobriety. They are generally masters of most of the eastern languages; are of strong, robust constitutions; of all people, the most attentive to the beasts and merchandise they have in charge; exceedingly faithful, and content with little. This Matthew, queen Helena chose for her ambassador to Portugal, and joined a young Abyssinian with him, who died in the voyage. He was charged with letters to the king, which, with the other dispatches, as they are long, and abound with fiction and bombast rather than truth and facts, I have not troubled myself to transcribe; they are, besides, in many printed collections*.

It appears clearly from these letters, that they were the joint compositions of Covillan, who knew perfectly the manner of corresponding with his

COURT

* Vide Marmol, vol. i. cap. 37.

court upon dangerous subjects, and of the simple Abyssinian confidants of the empress Helena, who, unacquainted with embassies or correspondence with princes, or the ill consequence that these letters would be of to their ambassador and his errand, if they happened to be intercepted by an enemy, told plainly all they desired and wished to execute by the assistance of the Portuguese. Thus, in the first part of the letter, (which we shall suppose dictated by Covillan) the empress remits the description of her wants, and what is the subject of the embassy, to Matthew her ambassador, whom she qualifies as her confidential servant, instructed in her most secret intentions; desiring the king of Portugal to believe what he shall report from her to him in private, as if they were her own words uttered immediately from her to him in person. So far was prudent; such a conduct as we should expect from a man like Covillan, long accustomed to be trusted with the secret negotiations of his sovereign.

But the latter end of his dispatches (the work, we suppose, of Abyssinian statesmen) divulges the whole secret. It explains the motives of this embassy in the clearest manner, desiring the king of Portugal to send a sufficient force to destroy Mecca and Medina; to assist them with a sufficient number of ships, and to annihilate the Turkish power by sea; while they, by land, should extirpate all the Mahometans on their borders; and it stigmatizes these Mahometans, both Turks and Moors, with the most opprobrious names it was possible to devise.

With

With the first part of these dispatches, it is plain, Matthew, as an envoy, might have passed unmolested; he had only to give to the secret wishes of the empress, with which he was charged, what kind of mercantile colour he pleased. But the last part of the letter brought home to him a charge of the deepest dye, both of sacrilege and high-treason, that he meditated against the Ottoman empire, whose Raya * he was; and, there can be no doubt, had these letters been intercepted and read, Matthew's embassy and life would have ended together under some exquisite species of torture. This, indeed, he seems to have apprehended; as, after his arrival in India, he constantly refused to shew his dispatches, even to the Portuguese viceroy himself, from whom, in the instant, he had received very singular favour and protection.

The king, when of age, never could be brought to acknowledge this embassy by Matthew; but, as we shall see, did constantly deny it. If we believe the Portuguese, the despair of the empress was so great, that she offered one-third of the kingdom to the king of Portugal if he relieved her. Nothing of this kind appears in the letters; but, if this offer was part of Matthew's private dispatches, we may see a reason why David did not wish to own the commission and offer as his.

Matthew had a safe passage to Dabul in India, but here his misfortunes began. The governor, taking him for a spy, confined him in close prison. But Albuquerque, then viceroy of India, residing

at

* Is a subject paying Capitation.

at Goa, who had himself a design upon Abyssinia, hearing that such a person, in such a character, was arrived, sent and took him out of the hands of the governor of Dabul, where his sufferings else would not have so quickly ended. All the Portuguese cried out upon seeing such an ambassador as Matthew sent to their master; sometimes they pretended that he was a spy of the Sultan, at other times he was an impostor, a cook, or some other menial servant.

Albuquerque treated with him privately before he landed, to make his commissions known to him; but he expressly refused shewing any letter unless to the king himself in Portugal. This behaviour hurt him in the eyes of the viceroy, who was therefore disposed, with the rest of his officers, to slight him when he should come ashore. But Matthew, now out of danger, and knowing his person to be sacred, would no longer be treated like a private person. He sent to let the viceroy, bishop, and clergy know, that, besides his consequence as an ambassador, which demanded their respect, he was the bearer of a piece of wood of the true cross which he carried as a present to the king of Portugal; and, therefore, he required them, as they would avoid an imputation of sacrilege, to shew to that precious relic the utmost respect, and celebrate its arrival as a festival. No more was necessary after this. The whole streets of Goa were filled with processions; the troops were all under arms; the viceroy, and the principal officers, met Matthew at his landing, and conveyed him to the palace, where he was magnificently lodged and feasted.

feasted. But nothing could long overcome the prejudices the Portuguese had imbibed upon the first sight of him; and, notwithstanding he carried a piece of the true cross, both he and it soon fell into perfect oblivion: Nor was it till 1513, after he had staid three years in India, that he got leave to proceed to Portugal by a fleet returning home loaded with spices.

Damianus Goetz the historian, though apparently a man of good sense and candour, cannot conjecture why this Armenian was sent as an ambassador, and wishes to be resolved why not an Abyssinian nobleman. But it is obvious from the character I have already given of him, there could be nobody in the empress's power that had half his qualifications; and, besides, an Abyssinian nobleman would not have ventured to go, as knowing very well that everywhere beyond the limits of his own country he would have been without protection; and the first Turk in whose power he might have fallen would have sold him for a slave. In no other character is any of his nation seen, either in Arabia or India, and his master has no treaty with any state whatever. Add to this, that an Abyssinian speaks no language but his own, which is not understood out of his own country; and is absolutely ignorant even of the existence of other far distant nations.

But, besides, there was an Abyssinian sent with Matthew, who died; and here Damianus Goetz's wonder should cease.

The same ill-fortune, which had attended Matthew in India, followed him in his voyage to Portugal. The captains of the ships contended with each

each other who should behave worst to him; and, in the midst of all this ill-treatment, the ship which he was on board of arrived at Lisbon. The king, upon hearing the particulars of this ill usage, immediately put the offenders in irons, where they had, probably, lain during their lives, had they not been freed by the intercession of Matthew.

David (as I have before observed) was only eleven years old* when he was placed upon the throne; and, at his inauguration, took the name of Lebna Denghel, or the Virgin's Frankincense; then that of Etana Denghel, or the Myrrh of the Virgin; and after that, of Wanag Segued, which signifies Reverenced, or Feared, among the Lions, with whom towards the last of his reign, he resided in wilds and mountains more than with men.

During this minority, there was peace with Mahomet king of Adel. Maffudi still continued his depredations; and, by his liberality, had formed strong connections with the Turks in Arabia. In return for the number of slaves whom he had sent to Mecca, a green silk standard, (that of Mahomet and of the Faith), and a tent of black velvet, embroidered with gold, were sent him by the Sherriffe, the greatest honour a Mahometan could possibly receive, and he was also made Shekh of the island of Zeyla, which was delivering the key of Abyssinia to him.

It was not till David had arrived at sixteen years of age that the constant success of Maffudi, the honours bestowed upon him, and the gain which accrued

* Vid. David's letter to Emanuel, king of Portugal 1524.

accrued from all his expeditions, had at last determined the king of Adel to break the peace with Abyssinia, and join him. These princes, with the whole Mahometan force, had fallen together upon Dawaro, Ifat, and Fatigar; and, in one year, had driven away, and slain, above nineteen thousand Christians, subjects to the king. A terror was now spread over the whole kingdom, and great blame laid both upon the empress and the king, for sitting and looking timidly on, while the Turks and Moors, year after year, ravaged whole provinces without resistance.

These murmurs at last roused David, who, for his own part, had not suffered them willingly so long. He determined immediately to raise an army, and to command it in person: In vain the empress admonished him of his danger, and his absolute want of experience in matters of war; in vain she advised him to employ some of the old officers against the veteran Moorish troops.

The king answered, That every officer of merit had been tried already, and baffled from beginning to end, so that the army had no confidence in them; that he was resolved to take his trial as the others had done, and leave the event where it ought to be left. Though the diviners all prophesied ill from this resolution of the king, the generality of the kingdom, and young nobility, flocked to his standard, rejoicing in a leader so near their own age. The middle-aged had great hopes of the vigour of that youth; and the old were not more backward, satisfied of the weight their years and experience

rience must give them in the councils of a young king.

Seldom a better army took the field; and the empress, from her own treasures, furnished every thing, even to superfluity, engaging all the people of consequence by giving them, in the most affable manner, presents in hand, and magnificent promises of recompence hereafter. Great as these preparations were, they had not made much impression among the confederates in Adel; and already the king had put himself at the head of his army, before the Moors seemed to think it worth their while to follow him. They were, indeed, at that very time, laying waste a part of the kingdom of Abyssinia. The king, then, by quick marches, advanced through Fatigar, as if he was going to Auffa, the capital of Adel.

Between Fatigar and the plain country of Adel there is a deep large valley, through which it was necessary the army should pass. Very steep mountains bound it on every side, whilst two openings (each of them very narrow) were the only passages by which it was possible to enter or go out. The king divided his army into two; he kept the best troops and largest body with himself, and sent Betwudet with the rest, as if they intended to fight the enemy before they gained the defiles. The Moors, on the other hand, terrified at what must happen if the king with his army marched into their defenceless country, accounted it a great escape to get into these very defiles before they were forced to an engagement. Betwudet, who desired no more, gave them their way, and, entering the valley behind them;

them, encamped there. The king, at the other end, had done the same, unseen by the enemy, who thought he was advanced on his march to Auffa. The Moors were thus completely hemmed in, and the king's army vastly superior. He had ordered his tents to be left standing, with a body of troops in them, and these completely covered the only outlet to the valley, whilst Betwudet and his party had advanced considerably, and made much the same disposition.

The king drew up his troops early in the morning, and offered the enemy battle, when the whole Abyssinian army was surpris'd to discover a backwardness in the Moors so unlike their behaviour at former times; well they might, when they were informed from whom that panic among the Moors came. Maffudi, a fanatic from the beginning, whether really deceived by such a prophecy, or rais'd to a pitch of pride and enthusiasm by the honours he had received, and desirous, by a remarkable death, to deserve the rank of martyr among those of his own religion, or from whatever cause it arose, came to the king of Adel, and told him, that his time was now come; that it had been prophesied to him long ago, that if, that year, he fought the king of Abyssinia in person, he was there to lose his life: That he knew, for certain, David was then present, having, with his own eyes, seen the scarlet tent (a colour which is only used by the king; he desired, therefore, the king of Adel to make the best of his way through a less steep part of the mountain, which he shewed him; to take his family and favourites along with him, and leave
under

under his command the army to try their fortune with David. Mahomet, at no time very fond of fighting, never found himself less so than upon this advice of Maffudi's. He resolved, therefore, to follow his counsel; and, before the battle began, withdrew himself through the place that was shewn him, and was followed by a few of his friends.

It was now nine o'clock, and the sun began to be hot, before which the Abyssinians never choose to engage, when Maffudi, judging the king of Adel was beyond danger, sent a trumpet to the Abyssinian camp, with a challenge to any man of rank in the army to fight him in single combat, under condition that the victory should be accounted to belong to that army whose champion was victorious, and that, thereupon, both parties should withdraw their troops without further bloodshed. It does not appear whether the conditions were agreed to, but the challenge was accepted as soon as offered. Gabriel Andreas the monk, who, in the reign of Naod, had by the king's order, lost a part of his tongue for giving it too much licence, offered himself first to the king, beseeching him to trust to him that day, his own honour, and the fortune of the army. The king consented without hesitation, with the general applause of all the nobility; for Andreas, though a monk, was a man of great family and distinction; the most learned of the court; liberal, rich, affable, and remarkable for facetious conversation; he was, besides, a good soldier, of tried skill and valour, and, in strength and activity, surpassed by no man in the army.

Maffudi

Maffudi was not backward to present himself; nor was the combat longer than might be expected from two such willing champions. Gabriel Andreas, seeing his opportunity, with a two-handed sword struck Maffudi between the lower part of the neck and the shoulder, so violently, that he nearly divided his body into two, and felled him dead to the ground. He then cut his head off, and threw it at the king's feet, saying, "There is the Goliath of the infidels."

This expression became instantly the word of battle, or signal to charge. The king, at the head of his troops, rushed upon the Moorish army, and, throwing them into disorder, drove them back upon Betwudet, who, with his fresh troops, forced them again back to the king. Seeing no hopes of relief, they dispersed to the mountains, and were slaughtered and hunted like wild beasts by the peasants, or driven to perish with thirst and hunger. About 12,000 of the Mahometan army are said to have been slain upon the field, with no very considerable loss on the side of the conquerors. The green standard of Mahomet was taken, as also the black velvet tent embroidered with gold; which last, we shall see, the king gave to the Portuguese ambassador some time afterwards, to consecrate and say mass in. A vast number of cattle was taken, and with them much rich merchandise of the Indies. Nor did the king content himself with what he had got in battle. He advanced and encamped at a place where was held the first market of Adel*.

* Vide Map of Shoa.

The next day he proceeded to a town where was a house of the king, and, going up to the door, and finding it locked, he struck the door with his lance, and nobody answering, he prohibited the soldiers from plundering it, and retired with his army home, leaving his lance sticking in the door as a sign of his having been there, and having had it in his power.

Though the king was received on his return amidst the greatest acclamations of his subjects, as the saviour of his country, the eyes of the whole nation and army were first fixed on Andreas, whose bravery had at last delivered them from that constant and inveterate scourge, Maffudi. Every body pressed forward to throw flowers and green branches in his way; the women celebrating him with songs, putting garlands on his head, and holding out the young children to see him as he passed. The battle was fought in the month of July 1516; and, the same day, the island of Zeyla, in the mouth of the Red Sea, was taken, and its town burned by the Portuguese armament, under Lopez Saurez Alberguiera.

Neither the suspicions transmitted from India, nor the mean person of Matthew the ambassador, seem to have made any impression upon the king of Portugal. He received him with every sort of honour, and testified the most profound respect for his master, and attention to the errand he came upon. Matthew was lodged and maintained with the utmost splendour; and, considering the great use of so powerful a friend on the African coast of the Red Sea, where his fleets would meet with all sort of provision

provision and protection, while they pursued the Turkish squadrons, he prepared an embassy on his part, and sent Matthew home on board the fleet commanded by Lopez Suarez for India.

Edward Galvan, a man of capacity and experience, who had filled the offices of secretary of state and ambassador in Spain, France, and Germany, arrived at that time of life when he might reasonably expect to pass the rest of his days in ease, wealth, and honour, found himself unexpectedly chosen, at the age of eighty-six to go ambassador from his sovereign to Abyssinia. Goetz had much more reason to wonder at the ambassador fixed upon by his master, than at that of Abyssinia sent by the empress Helena to Portugal. The fleet under Suarez entered the Red Sea, and anchored at the flat island of Camaran, close on the coast of Arabia Felix, one of the most unwholesome places he could have chosen. Here Edward Galvan died; and here Suarez, most ignorantly, resolved to pass the winter, which he did, suffering much for want of every sort of provision but water; whereas twenty-four hours of any wind would have carried him to Masuab, to his journey's end; where, if he had lost the monsoon, he would still have had great abundance of necessaries, and been in the way every moment of promoting the wishes of his master.

Lopez de Segueyra succeeded the ignorant Suarez, who had returned to India. He fitted out a strong fleet at Goa, with which he entered the Red Sea, and sailed for the island of Masuab, where he arrived the 16th of April 1520, having Matthew along with him. Upon the first approach of the

fleet, the inhabitants, both of the island and town, abandoned them, and fled to Arkeeko on the main land. Segueyra having remained before Masuah a few days without committing any hostilities, there came at last to him a Christian and a Moor from the continent; who informed him that the main-land then before him, was part of the kingdom of Abyssinia, governed by an officer called Baharnagash: they added, that the reason of their flying at the sight of the fleet was, that the Turks frequently made descents, and ravaged the island; but that all the inhabitants of the continent were Christians. The Portuguese general was very joyful on this intelligence, and began to treat Matthew more humanely, finding how truly and exactly he had described these places. He gave, both to the Christian and Moor that came off to him, a rich vest; commended them for having fled to Arkeeko rather than expose themselves to an attack from the Turks, but directed them to assure the people on the continent, that they too were all Christians, and under the command of the king of Abyssinia; being arrived there purposely for his service, so that they might return whenever they please, in perfect safety.

The next day, came down to the shore the governor of Arkeeko, accompanied with thirty horsemen, and above two hundred foot. He was mounted on a fine horse, and dressed in a kind of shirt resembling that of the Moors. The governor brought down four oxen, and received in return certain pieces of silk, with which he was well pleased. A very familiar conversation followed; the governor
kindly

kingly inviting the Portuguese general ashore, assuring him that the Baharnagash, under whose command he was, had already intelligence of his arrival.

In answer to his inquiries about the religion of the country, the governor told him, that in a mountain, then in sight, twenty-four miles distant, there was a convent called *the Monastery of Bisan*, (which Matthew had often described in the voyage (whose monks, being informed of his arrival, had deputed seven of their number to wait upon him, whom the Portuguese general went to meet accordingly, and received them in the kindest manner.

These monks, as soon as they saw Matthew, broke out into the warmest expressions of friendship and esteem, congratulating him with tears in their eyes upon his long voyage and absence. The Portuguese general then invited the monks on board his vessel, where he regaled them, and gave to each presents that were most suitable to their austere life. On his side, Segueyra chose seven Portuguese, with Peter Gomez Tessler, auditor of the East Indies, who understood Arabic very well, to return the visit of the monks, and see the monastery of Bisan. This short journey they very happily performed. Tessler brought back a parchment manuscript, which he received as a present from the monks, to be sent to the king of Portugal.

It was on the 24th of April that the Baharnagash arrived at Arkeeko, having before sent information of his intended visit. The Portuguese general who never doubted but that he would come to the sea-side, pitched his tents, and spread his carpets and cushions on the ground to receive him. But
it

it was signified to him from the Baharnagash, who was probably afraid of putting himself under the guns of the fleet, that he did not intend to advance so far, and that the governor should meet him half way. This being agreed to on both sides, they sat down on the grass.

The Baharnagash began the conversation, by telling the Portuguese, they had, in virtue of certain prophecies, been long expected in this country; and that he, and all the officers of Abyssinia, were ready to do them every service and kindness. After the Portuguese general had returned a proper answer, the priests and monks concluded the interview with certain religious services. Segueyra then made the Baharnagash a present of a very fine suit of complete armour with some pieces of silk; while the Baharnagash, on his side, made the return with a very fine horse and mule.

All doubt concerning Matthew was removed at this interview; he was acknowledged as a genuine ambassador. The Portuguese now flocked to Segueyra, beseeching him to choose from among his men, who should accompany him to the court. The first step was to name Roderigo de Lima ambassador from the king of Portugal, instead of Galvan, who was dead; and for his suite, George de Breu, Lopez de Gama, John Scolare secretary to the ambassador, John Gonfavez his factor and interpreter, Emmanuel de Mare organist, Peter Lopez, Master John his physician, Gaspar Pereira, and Lazarus d'Andrad a painter. The three chaplains were John Fernandes, Peter Alphonso Mendez, and Francisco Alvarez. In this company also

went

went Matthew, the Abyssinian ambassador returned from Portugal, and with him three Portuguese, one called Magailanes, the other Alvarengo, and the third Diego Fernandes.

It seemed probable, the severe blow which David had given to the king of Adel, by the total destruction of his army on the death of his general Maffudi, would have procured a cessation of hostilities to the Abyssinian frontiers, which they had not experienced during the life of that general; but it appeared afterwards, that, increased in riches and population by the great accession of power which followed the interruption of the Indian trade in Arabia by the Turkish conquest, far from entertaining thoughts of peace, they were rather meditating a more formidable manner of attack, by training themselves to the use of fire-arms and artillery, of which they had provided a quantity, and to which the Abyssinians were as yet strangers.

The king was encamped in Shoa, covering and keeping in awe his Mahometan provinces, Fatigar and Dawaro; besides which he seemed to have no object but the conquest of the Dobas, that bordered equally upon the Moorish and Christian frontiers, and who (though generally gained by the Mahometans) were, when occasion offered, enemies to both. The Shum* of Giannamora, a small district belonging to Abyssinia, full of brave soldiers, and considerably reinforced by David for the very purpose, had the charge of bringing these barbarians

* Or Governor.

rians to subjection, as being their immediate neighbour.

The king had afterwards advanced eastward to the frontiers of Fatigar, but was still in the southern part of his dominions. The ambassador and his retinue were landed on the north. They were to cross the whole extent of the empire through woods and over mountains, the like of which are not known in Europe, full of savage beasts, and men more savage than the beasts themselves; intersected by large rivers, and what was the worst circumstance, swelling every day by the tropical rains. Frequently deserts of no considerable length, indeed, intervened, where no sustenance was to be found for man or beast, nor relief for accidental misfortunes. Yet such was the bravery of that small company, that they hesitated not a moment to undertake this enterprize. Every thing was thought easy which contributed to the glory of their king, and the honour of their country.

It was not long before this gallant company found need of all their constancy and courage; for in their short journey to the convent of St. Michael (the first they attempted) they found the wood so thick that there was scarcely passage for either man or beast. Briers and thorns, too, of a variety of species, which they had never before seen, added greatly to the fatigue which the thickness of the woods had occasioned. Mountains presented themselves over mountains, broken into terrible precipices and ravines, by violent torrents and constant storms; their black and bare tops seemed as it were calcined by the rays of a burning sun, and

and by incessant lightnings and thunder. Great numbers of wild beasts also presented themselves every where in these dark forests, and seemed only to be hindered from devouring them by their wonder at seeing so many men in so lonely a situation. At last the woods began to grow thinner, and some fields appeared where the people were sitting armed, guarding their small flocks of half-starved goats and kine, and crops of millet, of which they saw a considerable quantity sown. The men were black, their hair very gracefully plaited, and were altogether naked, excepting a small piece of leather that covered their middle. At this place they were met by twelve monks, four of whom were distinguished by their advanced years and the respect paid to them by the others.

Having rested their mules and camels a short time, they again began their journey by the side of a great lake, near which was a very high mountain, and this they were too weary to attempt to pass. Full of discontent and despondency, they halted at the foot of this mountain, where they passed the night, having received a cow for supper, a present from the convent. Here Matthew (the ambassador) separated his baggage from that of the caravan, and left it to the care of the monks. He had probably made some little money in Portugal; and, distrusting his reception with the king, wisely determined to place it out of danger. The precaution, however, proved superfluous; for, a few days after, an epidemical fever began to manifest itself, which, in eight-and-forty hours, carried off Matthew, and soon after Pereira, the servant of Don

Don Roderigo ; so that no opportunity now offered for an explanation with the king about his or the empress's promise of ceding one-third of the kingdom to the Portuguese in case the king would send them succour. Terrified by the fever, and the bad prospect of the weather, they resumed their journey.

The monastery of Bisan (to which they were now going) is so called from the great quantity of water which is every where found about it. The similitude of sound has made Poncet *, and several other travellers, call it the Monastery of the Vision ; but Bisan (water) is its true name, being plentifully supplied with that most valuable element. A number of lakes and rivers are interspersed through its plains ; while abundant springs, that are never dry, flow from the top of each rock, dashing their rills against the rugged projections of the cliffs below.

The monastery of Bisan, properly so called, is the head of six others in the compass of 26 miles ; each convent placed like a tower on the top of its own rock. That upon which Bisan is situated is very high, and almost perpendicular ; and from this rises another still higher than it, which unless to its inhabitants, is perfectly inaccessible. It is, on every side, surrounded with wood, interspersed with fruit-trees of many different kinds, as well of those known as of those unknown in Europe. Oranges, citrons, and limes are in great abundance ;

* Vide Poncet's travels, in his return through Tigré, p. 116. London edit. 12mo. 1709.

dance ; wild peaches and small figs of a very indifferent quality ; black grapes, on loaded branches, hang down from the barren timber round which they are twined, and afford plentiful supply to man and beast : The fields are covered with myrtles and many species of jessamin ; with roses too of various colours ; but fragrance is denied to them all, except one sort, which is the white one, single-leafed *.

The monks of these convents were said once to be about a thousand in number. They have a large territory, and pay a tribute in cows and horses to the Baharnagash, who is their superior. Their horses are esteemed good, as coming from the neighbourhood of the Arabs. However, though I had absolute choice of them all during the time I commanded the king's guard, I could never draw from that part of the country above a score of sufficient strength and size to bear a man in complete armour.

I shall now leave Don Roderigo to pursue his journey towards the king at Shoa. The history of it, and of his embassy, published at large by Alvarez his chaplain, has not met, from the historians of his own country, with a reception which favours the authenticity of its narrative. There are, indeed, in the whole of it, and especially where religion is concerned, many things very difficult of belief, which seem to be the work of the Jesuits some years posterior to the time in which Alvarez was in Abyssinia. Tellez condemns him, though a
writer

* In Barbary called *Mishta*, in Abyssinia, *Kagga*.

writer of those times ; and Damianus Goez, one of the first historians, says, that he had seen a journal written in Alvarez's own name, very different from the journal that is gone forth to the public. For my part, I can only say, that what is related of the first audience with the king, and many of the following pages, seem to me to be fabrications of people that never have been in Abyffinia ; and, if this is the case, no imputation can be laid against Francisco Alvarez, as, perhaps, he is not the author of the misrepresentation in question. But, as to the cordiality with which the Catholic religion was received by the monks and people in general, during the long stay and bad reception Don Roderigo met with, I have no sort of doubt that this is a falsehood, and this must be charged directly to his account.

We have already seen that, early as Zara Jacob's time, the religion of the Franks was held in the utmost detestation, and that in Bæda Mariam's reign the whole country was in rebellion, because the king had directed the Virgin Mary to be painted by one Branca Leon, a Venetian painter, then alive, and in court, when Don Roderigo de Lima was with the king in Shoa. Iscander and Naod were both strict in the tenets of the church of Alexandria ; and two Abunas, Imaranha Christos, who lived till Iscander's time, and Abuna Marcus, alive in Alvarez's, had given no allowance for strange or foreign worship to be introduced. How the Catholic could be so favourably and generally received in the time of Alvarez is what I cannot conceive. Blood enough was split immediately afterwards, to
shew

shew that this affection to the Roman Catholic religion, if any such there was in Alvarez's time, must have been merely transitory. When, therefore, I find any thing in this journal plainly misunderstood, I explain and vindicate it; where I see there is a fact deliberately misrepresented, such as the celebration of the Epiphany, I refute it from ocular demonstration. The rest of the journal I leave *in medio* to the judgment of my reader, who will find it at his bookseller's; only observing, that there can be no doubt that the journey itself was made by Don Roderigo, and the persons named with him.

I have preserved the several stations of these travellers in my map, though a great part of the countries through which they passed is now in the hands of the Galla, and is as inaccessible to Abyssinians as it is to strangers.

There are two particulars in Alvarez's account of this journey which very much surprize me. The first is, the daily and constant danger this company was in from tigers, so daring as to present themselves within pike-length. Of this I have taken notice in the appendix when speaking of the hyæna.

The other particular relates to the field of beans through which they passed. I never yet saw this sort of grain, or pulse in Abyssinia. The lupine, a wild plant somewhat similar, chiefly infects those provinces from which the honey comes, and is regarded there with the utmost aversion. The reason of which will be seen in the sequel. But as these Mahometans, through whose country Don Roderigo passed, are not indigenious, and never had any connection with the ancient state of manners

or religion of this country, it is more than probable the cultivation of the bean is no older than the settlement of these Mahometans here, long after the Pythagorean prejudices against that plant were forgotten.

It was on the 16th of April 1520 that Don Rodrigo de Lima landed in Abyffinia; and it was the 16th of October of the same year when he arrived within sight of the king's camp, distant about three miles. The king had advanced, as hath been said, into Fatigar, about twenty-five miles from the first fair in the kingdom of Adel, and something less than two hundred from the port of Zeyla. The ambassador after so painful a journey, expected an immediate admission into the king's presence. Instead of which, a great officer, called *the Hadug Ras**, which is chief or commander of the asses, was sent to carry him three miles farther distant, where they ordered him to pitch his tent, and five years passed in the embassy afterwards before he procured his dismissal.

Alvarez accounts very lamely for this prodigious interval of time; and, excepting the celebration the Epiphany, he does not mention one remarkable occurrence in the whole of this period. One would imagine their stay had not been above a month, and that one conversation only passed upon business, which I shall here set down as a specimen of the humour the parties were in the one with the other.

The king carried the ambassador, to see the church Mecana Selaffé, the church of the Trinity, which

* This is a name of humility. He is a great officer, and has no care or charge of asses.

which was then repairing, where many of the kings had been buried while the Royal family resided in Shoa. All the churches in Abyssinia are thatched. Some of Roderigo's own retinue, who bore him ill-will, had put it into the king's head how elegant this church would be if covered with lead, a thing he certainly could have no idea of. He asked Don Roderigo, whether the king of Portugal could not send him as much sheet-lead as would serve to cover that church? To which the ambassador replied, That the king of Portugal, upon bare mentioning the thing, would send him as much sheet-lead § as would cover not only that church, but all the other churches he should ever build in Abyssinia; and, after all, the present would be but a trifling one.

Immediately upon this the king changed his discourse; and observed to the ambassador, in a very serious tone of voice, "That, since they were now upon the subject of presents, he could not help letting the king of Portugal know, that, if ever he sent an ambassador again into that country, he should take care to accompany him with presents of value, for otherwise stranger ambassadors that ventured to come before him without these very ill received." To which the ambassador returned warmly, "That it was very from being the custom of the king of Portugal to send presents to any king upon earth; that, having no superior, it was usual for him, only to receive them from others, and to accept them or not, according to his royal pleasure; for it was infinitely below him to consider
what

what was the value of the present itself. He then desired the king of Abyssinia might be informed, that he, Don Roderigo, came ambaffador from the general of the Indies; and not from the king of Portugal; nevertheless, when the king of Portugal had lately dispatched Galvan, who had died upon the road, ambaffador to his highness, he had sent with him presents to the value of 100,000 ducats, consulting his own greatness, but not considering himself as under any obligation to send any presents at all; and as to the many scandalous aspersions that had been thrown upon him by mean people, which the king had given credit to, and were made constantly part of his discourse, he wished his highness, from the perusal of the letters which he had brought from the general of the Indies, to learn, that the Portuguese were not accustomed to use lying and dissimulation in their conversations, but to tell the naked truth; to which he the ambaffador had strictly confined himself in every circumstance he had related to his highness, if he pleased to believe him; if not, that he was very welcome to do just whatever he thought better in his own eyes. Yet he would, once for all, have his highness to know, that, though he came only as ambaffador from the general of the Indies, he could, as such, have presented himself before the greatest soveraign upon earth, without being subjected to hear such conversation as he had been daily exposed to from his highness, which he, as a Portuguese nobleman and a foldier, though he had been no ambaffador at all, was not any way disposed to suffer,

suffer, and therefore he desired his immediate dismissal."

Upon this the king said, "That the distinction he had shewn him was such as he would never have met with from any of his predecessors, having brought no present of any value." To which the ambassador replied in great warmth, "That he had received no distinction in this country whatever, but only injuries and wrongs; that he should think he became a martyr if he died in this country where he had been robbed of every thing, except the clothes upon his back; that Matthew, who was but a pretended ambassador, had been much otherwise treated by the king of Portugal; but for himself he desired nothing but a speedy dismissal, having delivered his letters and done his errand: Till that time, he should expect to be treated like a man of honour, above lying or falsehood." To this the king answered, "That he believed him to be a man of honour, worth, and veracity, but that Matthew was a liar: at the same time he wished Don Roderigo to know, that he was perfectly informed what degree of respect and good usage Matthew had met with from the king of Portugal's officers and captains, but that he did not impute this Don Roderigo."

There was a rumour at court which very much alarmed the ambassador; it was, that the king intended to detain him according to the invariable custom and practice of his country. Two Venetians, Nicholas Branca Leon and Thomas Gradi-
nego, had been forcibly detained since the reign of Bæda Mariam. But what terrified Don Rode-

rigo still more, as a case most similar to his, was the fight of Peter Covillan then in court, who had been sent ambassador by John king of Portugal to Iſcander, and ever ſince was detained without being able to get leave to return, but was obliged to marry and ſettle in the country.

What was the emperor's real intention is impoſſible now to know; but, having reſolved to ſend an Abyſſinian ambaffador to the king of Portugal, it was neceſſary to diſmiſs Don Roderigo likewiſe. However, he did not entirely abandon the whole of his deſign, but forcibly detained Maſter John the ſecretary, and Lazarus d'Andrad the painter, and obliged Don Roderigo to depart without them. Zaga Zaab, an Abyſſinian monk, who had learned the Portugueſe language by waiting on Don Roderigo during his ſtay in Abyſſinia, was choſen for the function; and they ſet out together for Maſuah, plentifully furniſhed with every thing neceſſary for the journey, and arrived ſafely there without any remarkable occurrence, where they found Don Hector de Silveyra, governor of the Indies, with his fleet, waiting to carry Don Roderigo de Lima home. Whether the king had changed his mind or not is doubtful; but, on the 27th of April 1526, arrived four meſſengers from court with orders for Don Roderigo to return, and alſo to bring Don Hector along with him. This was immediately and directly reſuſed; but it was left in the power of Zaga Zaab to return if he pleaſed, who however declared, that, if he ſtaid behind, he ſhould be thrown to the lions. He, therefore, went on board with great readineſs, and

and they all failed from Mafuah on the 28th of April of the year juſt mentioned, in their return to India.

Theſe frequent intercourſes with the Portugueſe had given great alarm to the Mahometan powers, though neither the king of Abyſſinia, nor the Portugueſe themſelves, had reaped any profit from them, or the ſeveral fleets that had arrived at Mafuah, which had really no end but to ſeek the ambaffador Don Roderigo. The fix years ſpent in wrangling and childiſh behaviour, both on the part of the king and the ambaffador, had an appearance of ſomething ſerious between the two powers; and what ſtill alarmed the Moors more was, that no part of the ſecret had tranſpired, becauſe no ſcheme had really been concerted, only mere propoſals of vain and idle enterpriſes, without either power or will to put them in execution. Such were the plans of a joint army, to attack Arabia, and to conquer it down to Jeruſalem. The Turks † were on their progreſs ſouthward in great force; they had conquered Arabia in leſs than half the time Don Roderigo had ſpent quarrelling with the king about pepper and mules; and a ſtorm was ready to break in a quarter leaſt expected.

In the gentle reigns of the Mamalukes, before the conqueſt of Egypt and Arabia by Selim ‡, a caravan conſtantly ſet out from Abyſſinia directly for Jeruſalem. They had then a treaty with the Arabs. This caravan rendezvouſed at Hamezen,

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† Canſo el Gauri, and Tomum Bey.

‡ Selim I. emperor of the Ottomans.

a small territory abounding in provisions, about two days journey from Dobarwa, and nearly the same from Mafuah; it amounted sometimes in number to a thousand pilgrims, ecclesiastics as well as laymen. They travelled by very easy journeys, not above six miles a-day, halting to perform divine service, and setting up their tents early, and never beginning to travel till towards nine in the morning. They had, hitherto, passed in perfect safety, with drums beating and colours flying, and, in this way, traversed the desert by the road to Suakem.

The year after Selim had taken possession of Cairo, Abba Azerata Christos, a monk famous for holiness, had conducted fifteen hundred of these pilgrims with him to Jerusalem, and they had arrived without accident; but, on their return, they had fallen in with a body of Selim's troops, who slew a great part of them, and forced others to take refuge in the desert, where they perished with hunger and thirst. In the year 1525, another caravan assembled at Hamazen, consisting of 336 friars and priests, and fifteen nuns. They set out from Hamazen; on the 12th day after leaving this place, travelling slowly; and, being loaded with provisions and water, they were attacked by the Moors of that district, and utterly defeated and robbed. Of the pilgrims taken prisoners, all the old men were put to the sword, and the young were sold for slaves; so that of 336 persons fifteen only escaped, but three of which lived to return to Shoa at the time the ambassador was there. This was the first vengeance the Moors to the northward had yet taken for the alliance made with the Portuguese; and, from
this

this time, the communication with Cairo through the desert ceased as to the Christians, and was carried on by Mahometans only.

Since the time of Peter Covillan's arrival in Abyffinia, the views of all parties had very much changed. The Portuguefe at first coveted the friendship of Abyffinia, for the fake obtaining through it a communication with India. But they now became indifferent about that intercourfe, fince they had fettled in India itfelf, and found the convenience of the paffage of the Cape of Good Hope. David, freed from his fears of the Moors of Adel, whom he had defeated, and feeing the great power of the Turks, fo much apprehended after the conqueft of Egypt, difappointed in India in all their attempts againft the Portuguefe fettlements there; being, moreover difpleafed with the abrupt behaviour of the ambaffador Don Roderigo, and the promifes the emprefs Helena had made by Matthew without his knowledge, he wifhed no further connection with the Portuguefe, for whose affiftance, he thought he fhould have no ufe.

Selim, whose firft object was the conqueft of India, had met there fo rude a reception that he began to defpair of further fuccefs in his undertaking; but, having conquered Arabia on one fide of the Red Sea, he was defirous of extending his dominions to the other alfo, and for three reafons: The firft was, that the fafety of the holy place of Mecca would be much endangered fhould a Portuguefe army and fleet rendezvous in Abyffinia, and be joined by an army there. The fecond, that his fhips and gallies could not be in fecurity at the bot-

tom of the Gulf, should the Portuguese obtain leave to fortify any island or harbour belonging to the Abyssinians. The third, that the king of Abyssinia being, as he was taught to believe, the prince whom the prophet Mahomet had honoured with his correspondence, he thought it a duty incumbent upon him to convert this prince and kingdom to the Mahometan religion by the sword, a method allowable in no religion but that of the Mahomet and of Rome.

The ancient and feeble arms of lances and bows, carried by half naked peasants assembled in haste and at random for an occasion, were now laid aside. In place of these, Selim had left garrisons of veteran troops in all the sea-coast towns of Arabia, exercised in fire-arms, and furnished with large trains of artillery, supported by a large fleet which, though destined against the Portuguese in India, and constantly beat by them, never failed, both going and coming, to reinforce their posts in Arabia with stores and fresh soldiers:

The empress Helena died in 1525, the year before the Portuguese embassy ended, after having brought about an interview between the two nations, which, by the continual disavowal of Matthew's embassy, it is plain that David knew not how to turn to his advantage. Soon after her death, the king prepared to renew the war with the Moors, without having received the least advantage from the Portuguese. But very differently had the people of Adel employed this interval of peace. They had strengthened themselves by the strictest friendship with the Turkish officers in Arabia, especially with the *basha* of
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of Zibit, a large trading port nearly opposite to Mafuah. A Turkish garrison was put into Zeyla; and a Turk, with a large train of artillery, commanded in it. All was ready against the first invasion the king was to make, and he was now marching directly towards their country.

The first retaliation, for the Portuguese friendship, (as we have already observed) had been the cutting off the caravan for Jerusalem. In revenge for this, the king had marched into Dawaro, and sent a body of troops from that province to see what was the state of the Moorish forces in Adel. These were no sooner arrived on the frontiers of that kingdom, than they were met by a number of the enemy appointed to guard those confines, and, coming to blows, the Abyssinians defeated, and drove them into the desert parts of their own country. The king still advanced till he met the Mahometan army, and a battle was fought at Shimbra Coré, where the Abyssinian army was totally defeated; the Betwudet, Hadug Ras, the governor of Amhara, Robel, governor of the mountain of Geshep, with the greatest part of the nobility, and four thousand men, were all slain.

Mahomet, called Gragné, (which signifies *left-handed*) commanded this army. He was governor of Zeyla, and had promoted the league with the Turkish bashas on the coast of Arabia; and, having now given the king a check in his first enterprise, he resolved to carry on the war with him in a way that should produce something decisive. He remained then quiet two years at home, sent all the prisoners he had made in the last expedition to Mecca,

Mecca, and to the Turkish powers on the coast, and required from them in return the number of troops stipulated, with a train of portable artillery, which was punctually furnished, while a large body of janizaries crossed over and joined the Moorish army. Mahomet led these troops straight into Fatigar, which he over-ran, as he did the two other neighbouring provinces Ifat and Dawaro, burning and laying waste the whole country, and driving, as was his usual manner, immense numbers of inhabitants, whom the sword had spared, back with him to Adel.

The next year, Mahomet marched from Adel directly into Dawaro, committing the same excesses. The king, who saw in despair that total ruin threatened his whole country, and that there were no hopes but in a battle, met the Moorish army at Ifras, very much inferior to them in every sort of appointment. The battle was fought 1st May 1528; the king was defeated, and Islam Segued, his first minister, who commanded the army that day, with many of his principal officers, were slain upon the spot, and the Moorish army took possession of Shoa. David retreated with his broken army into Amhara, and encamped at Hegu, thinking to procure reinforcements during the bad weather, but Gagne was too near to give him time for this. He entered Amhara, destroying all before him. The second of November he burnt the church of Mecana Selasse of the holy sepulchre, and Atronfa Mariam; and, on the 8th of the same month, Ganeta Georgis; on the 2d of December, Debra Agezia-beher; the 6th of

of the same month, St. Stephen's church; after which he returned to Adel with his booty.

The following year Gragné returned in April, plundered and burnt Warwar, and wintered there. In the year 1530 Gragné invaded the province of Tigré in the month of October, while the king, who had wintered in Dembea, marched up to Woggora; thence, in December, he went to Tsalamet, and returned to Tigré to keep the feast of the Epiphany.

The king, next year, marched through Tzegadé, and Gragné close followed him, as if he had been hunting a wild beast rather than making war. The 2d of January he burnt Abba Samuel, then went down into Mazaga the borders of Sennaar to a conference with Muchtar, one of his confederates, when it was resolved that they should fight the king wherever they could meet him, and attach themselves to his person alone. Gragné by forced marches overtook the king upon the Nile at Delakus, the 6th of February, and offered him battle, knowing the proud spirit of David, that he would not refuse, however great the disproportion was.

The event was such as might be expected. Fortune again declared against the king. Negadé Yafous, Acab Saat, and many others of the nobility perished, fighting to the last, in the fight of their sovereign. In this battle the brave monk, Andreas*, much advanced in years, was slain, behaving with the greatest gallantry, unwilling to survive the ruin of his country.

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* It was he who, as we have seen, slew the Moor Maffudi in single combat in the beginning of this reign.

The Moors now found it unnecessary to keep together an army. They divided into small parties, that they might more effectually and speedily ruin the country. Part of the Gagné's army was detached to burn Axum; the other under Simeon continued in Ambara to watch the king's motions; and, while he attempted to relieve Axum, dispersed his army, on which the town was burnt, and with it many of the richest churches in Abyffinia, Hallelujah, Banquol, Gafó, Debra Kerbé, and many others. And, on the 7th of April, Saul, son of Tesfo Yafous, fought another detachment of the Moorish army, and was cut to pieces.

The 28th year of his reign, 1536, the king crossed the Tacazzé, and had many disastrous encounters with the people of Siré and Serawé. Tesfo l'Oul, who commanded in this latter province for the king, surpris'd a Turkish party under Adli, whom he slew, and met the same fate himself from Abbas, Moorish governor of Serawé, when a great many of the principal people of that province were there slain. Galila, a large island in the lake Tzana, was plundered, and the convent upon it burnt. It was one of the principal places where the Abyffinians hid their treasure, and a great booty was found there.

In the following year, Gagne, in a message represented to him, that he might see he was fighting against God, exhorting him to be wise, and make his peace in time, which he should have upon the condition of giving him his daughter in marriage, and he would then withdraw his army, otherwise he would never leave Abyffinia till he had reduced

it to a condition of producing nothing but grass. But the king, nothing daunted, returned him for answer, That he was an infidel, and a blasphemer, used as an instrument to chastise him and his people for their many sins ; that it was his duty to bear the correction patiently ; but that it would soon happen, when this just purpose was answered, that he would be destroyed, and all those with him, as such wicked instruments had always been ; that he the king, and Abyffinia his kingdom, would be preserved as a monument of the mercy of God, who never entirely forsook his people, though he might chastise them.

Indeed, the condition of the country was now such that a total destruction seemed to be at hand ; for a famine and plague, its constant companion, raged in Abyffinia, carrying off those that the sword had spared.

Gideon and Judith, king and queen of the Jews, in the high country of Samen, after having suffered much from Gragne, had at last rebelled and joined him ; and the king, who it seems continued to shew an inclination to the Catholic church, which he had imbibed during the embassy of Don Roderigo, by this had occasioned many to fall off from him, he and the court observing Easter according to the Roman kalendar, while the rest of the clergy and kingdom continued firm to that of Alexandria.

At this time Osman of Dawaro, Jonadab, Kessa, Youfef, and other rebel Abyffinians, part of Ammer's army, one of Gragne's generals, surprized the king's eldest son, Victor, going to join his father

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ther the 7th day of March ; slew him, and dispersed his army. Three days after, the king himself came to action, with Ammer at Zaat in Waag, but he was there again beaten, and his youngest son Menas was taken prisoner. The king had scarce now an attendant, and, being almost alone, he took refuge among the rocks and bushes in a high mountain called *Tsalem*, in the district of Tsalamet. But he had not remained above a day there, when he was followed by Joram, (rebel-master of that district) and narrowly escaped being taken as he was crossing the Tacazze on foot and alone ; whence he took refuge on mount Tabor, a very high mountain in Sire, and there he passed the winter.

The amazing spirit and constancy of the king, who alone seemed not to forsake the cause of his kingdom, who now, without children or army, still singly, made war for the liberty of his country, astonished all Abyssinia as well friends as enemies. Every soldier, therefore, that could escape the small parties of the Moors which surrounded the king, joined him at Tabor, and he was again at the head of a very small, but brave body of troops, though it was scarcely known in what part of the kingdom he was hid. When Achmet-eddin, lieutenant of Ammer, passed through Sire, loaded with the spoils of the churches and towns he had plundered, the king, finding him within his reach, descended from the mountain, and, by a sudden march, surprised and slew him with his own hand, leaving the greatest part of his army dead on the field. After which he distributed the booty among his small army.

Ammer,

Ammer, the king's mortal enemy, who had taken upon himself the destruction of the royal family, descended into the province of Sire, and neighbourhood of Tabor, and there indulged himself in the most wanton cruelties, torturing and murdering the priests, burning churches and villages, hoping by this the king would lose his temper, and leave his strong hold in the mountain. But hearing at the same time, that a large quantity of plate, and other treasure, belonging to the church Debra Kerbe, had been carried into an island in the lake Tzana for safety, he left the king, and seized his booty in the lake to a very great amount.

However, he there fell ill of a fever; but, on his return, was so far advanced in his recovery as to resume his schemes of destroying the king; when, the night of the 10th of February 1538, while he was sleeping in bed in his tent, a common soldier, from what quarrel or cause is not known, went secretly and stabbed him several times in the belly with a two-edged knife, so that he died instantly; to David's great relief, and much to the safety of the whole kingdom.

It was now 12 years since Don Roderigo de Lima had sailed from Mafuah, carrying with him Zaga Zaab ambassador from the king of Abyssinia. This embassy arrived safe in Lisbon, and was received with great magnificence by king John; but, as the circumstances of the kingdom when he left Mafuah were really flourishing, and as the treatment he met in Portugal was better than he had, probably, ever experienced at home, he seems to have been in no haste to put an end to this embassy. On the other
side,

sides, the king of Portugal's affairs in India were arrived at that degree of prosperity and power, that little use remained for such an ally as the king of Abyssinia.

The Moorish trade and navigation to India had already received a fatal blow, as well from the Portuguese themselves, as from the fall of the Mamelukes in Egypt; and Soliman, and his servant Sinan Basha, by their conquest, and introducing soldiers who had not any idea or talent for trade, but only plunder and rapine, had given a finishing stroke to what the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope began. The filling Arabia with fire-arms and Turks was now of consequence to none but to David; and of such a consequence it had been, that, as we have seen, in the course of 12 years it had left him nothing in Abyssinia but the bare name of king, and a life so precarious that it could not be counted upon from one day's end to the other.

David had detained in Abyssinia two Portuguese, one called Master John, the other Lazarus d'Andrad a painter, being two of Don Roderigo's train that came from the Indies with him. The Abuna (Mark) was become old and incapable, and, since the Turkish conquest of Egypt, very indifferent to, and unconnected with, what passed at Cairo. Before he died, at the king's desire he had appointed John his successor, and accordingly ordained him Abuna, as well as having first given him all the inferior orders at once; for John was a layman and student in physic; a very simple creature, but a great bigot; and we shall from henceforward call him John Bermudes.

John very willingly consented to his ordination, provided the pope approved of it; and he set out for Rome, not by the usual way of India, but through Arabia and Egypt; and, arriving there without accident, was confirmed by Paul III. the then pope, not only as patriarch of Abyssinia, but of Alexandria likewise; to which he added, as Bermudes says, the most unintelligible and incomprehensible title of Patriarch of the Sea. Bermudes, to this variety of charges, had this other added to him, of ambassador from king David to the court of Portugal; and for this he was certainly very fit, however he might be for his ecclesiastical dignities; for he had been now 12 years in Abyssinia, knew the country well, and had been witness of the variety of distresses which, following close one upon another, had brought this country to its then state of ruin.

While these things passed in the north of Abyssinia, a terrible catastrophe happened in the south. A Mahometan chief, called Vizir Mudgid, governor of Arar, having an opportunity from his situation to hear of the riches which were daily carried from churches, and other places, for safety into the mountain of Geshen, took a resolution to attempt that natural fortress, though in itself almost impregnable, and strengthened by an army constantly encamped at the foot of it.

When Mudgid arrived near the mountain he found it was forsaken by the troops destined to guard it; and led by a Mahometan, who was a menial servant to the princes above, he ascended with his troops without opposition, putting all the
royal

royal family that were prisoners, and indeed every individual of either sex resident there, indiscriminately to the sword.

The measure of David's misfortunes seems to have been now full, and he died accordingly this very year 1540.

It will be necessary here to remind the reader, that Alvarez, the chaplain and historian of the first Portuguese embassy, was (as he said) on his return appointed by king David to make his submission to the pope. Leaving Zaga Zaab, therefore, in Portugal, he proceeded to Bologna, where the emperor Charles V. was then in person, before whom and the pope himself he delivered his credentials framed by Peter Covillan, and afterwards, in a long speech, the reasons of his embassy.

The pope received this submission of David with infinite pleasure, at a time when so many kingdoms in the west were revolting from his supremacy. He considered it as a thing of the greatest moment to be courted before the emperor by so powerful a prince in Africa. But as for the emperor himself, though he was then preparing for an expedition against the Mahometans, and though it was his favourite war, he seems to have been perfectly indifferent either to the embassy itself, or to the person that sent it; a great proof that he believed there was nothing real in it.

Many other people have doubted whether this embassy, or that of John Bermudes, actually came from the Abyssinian court, as the king would scarcely have abandoned the form of the Alexandrian church in which he had been brought up by

Abuna

Abuna Mark, then alive. Abuna Mark, moreover, could scarcely be believed to have promoted embassies which were intended to strike at the root of his own religion, and the patriarchal power with which he was endowed.

But to this it is easily answered, That the Abyfinian historian of David's reign, through the whole course of it, readily admits his constant attachment to the see of Rome. He gives a striking example of it during the war with Gragné, when the king celebrated Easter after the manner of the Roman Catholics, though it was to have this certain effect of dividing his kingdom, and alienating the minds of his subjects, of whose assistance he was then in the utmost need. And as for the Abuna, we are to consider that Cairo had been taken, and the government, which Abuna Mark owned for the lawful one, had been overturned by the Turks who then possessed it, and were actually persecuting the Alexandrian church.

The Abuna, then, and the king also, had the same reason for not applying to Cairo, the seat of the Turks their enemies; and, therefore, they more readily accommodated matters with a people from whom only their assistance could come; and without whom, it was probable, that both the Christian religion and civil government of Abyffinia would fall together.

It has been said of this king by the European writers who have touched upon the history of his reign, that he was a prince who had began it in the most promising manner, but after the death of the empress Helena, he had abandoned himself to all

fort of debauchery, and especially that of women; insomuch, as Mr. Ludolf says, he suffered his concubines to have idols in his palace. This I take to be a calumny copied from the Portuguese priests, who never forgave him the denial of his writing the letters by Matthew, in which it was said he gave the Portuguese, or rather king of Portugal, one-third of the kingdom; for he succeeded to the crown at 11 years of age, defeated and slew Maffudi when he was about sixteen; and, when Dom Roderigo and the Portuguese embassy were with him, he was then something more than twenty, a very devout, prudent prince, according to the account Alvarez, an eye-witness, gives of him; and all this time empress Helena was alive.

Again, the very year after the Portuguese embassy left Abyssinia, that is, in the year 1526, the king was defeated by the Moors, and, from that time to his death, was hunted about the country like a wild beast, from rock to rock, very often alone, and at all times slenderly attended, till he died, in 1540, at the age of 46; so there is no period during his life in which this calumny can be justly fixed upon him.

As for the idolatry he is accused of suffering in his palace among his Pagan mistresses, I cannot recollect any place in the adjoining nations from which he could have brought these idolatrous rites or mistresses. The Pagan countries around him profess a remnant of ill-understood Sabaism, worshipping the stars, the moon, and the wind; but I do not, as I say, recollect any of these bordering on Abyssinia, who worshipped idols.

CLAUDIUS,

CLAUDIUS, OR ATZENAF SEGUED.

From 1540 to 1559.

Prosperous Beginning of Claudius's Reign—Christopher de Gama lands in Abyssinia—Prevented by the rainy Season from joining the King—Battle of Ainal—Battle of Offalo—Christopher de Gama slain—Battle of Isaac's Bet—Moors defeated, and their General slain—Abyssinian Army defeated—Claudius slain—Remarkable Behaviour of Nur, Governor of Zeyla, General of the Moors.

CLAUDIUS succeeded his father David III. being yet young, and found the empire in circumstances that would have required an old and experienced prince. But, though young, he possessed those graceful and affable manners which, at first sight, attached people of all sorts to him. He had been tutored with great care by the empress Helena, was expert in all warlike exercises, and brave beyond his years.—So say the Abyssinian annals; and though I have no thought myself warranted to depart from the letter of the context, yet it is my duty to the reader to shew him how this could not be.

Claudius was born about 1522; the empress Helena died in 1525. From this it is plain, the first three years of his life was all that he could be under the tutelage of the empress Helena; and, at so early a period, it is not possible he could receive much advantage. The princess, to whom

he was indebted for his education, was Sabel Wenghel, celebrated in the Abyſſinian hiſtory for wiſdom and courage equal to the empreſs Helena. She was relict of David. We ſhall hereafter ſee her called Helena likewiſe upon another occaſion; but the reader is deſired to have in mind, that this confuſion of perſons is owing only to that of names to be met with almoſt in every reign in the Abyſſinian hiſtory.

Claudius is ſaid likewiſe in theſe annals to have been a child at the time of his acceſſion; but, having been born in 1522, and ſucceeding to the throne in 1540, he muſt have been eighteen years of age; and this cannot be called childhood, eſpecially in Abyſſinia, unleſs, as I have before ſaid, this obſervation of age was relative to the arduous taſk he had in hand, by ſucceeding to a kingdom arrived at the very eve of perdition.

The Moors, notwithstanding the conſtant ſucceſs they had againſt David, ſtill feared the conſequences of his long experience and undaunted reſolution in the moſt adverſe fortune. They were happy, therefore, in the change of ſuch an enemy, however unfortunate, for a young man ſcarcely yet out of the influence of female government, which had always been favourable to them, and their religion.

A general league was formed without delay among all the Mahometan chiefs to ſurround Claudius, and fall upon him before he was in a ſituation to defend himſelf, and by one ſtroke to put an end to the war. They accordingly ſet about collecting troops from all quarters, but with a degree of inattention and preſumption that ſufficiently ſhewed they

they thought themselves in no danger. But the young king having good intelligence that vizir Afa, Osman, Debra Yafous, and Joram, (who had so nearly taken his father prisoner in the mountain Tsalem) had their quarters near him, and neglected a good look-out, fell upon them, without their knowing what his force was, entirely defeated them, dispersed their army, and struck a panic into the whole confederacy by the manner this victory was followed up; the king himself on horseback continued the pursuit all that day and night, as also the next day, and did not return to his camp till the second evening after his victory, having slain without mercy every one that had fallen into his hands, either in the flight, or in the field of battle.

Claudius's behaviour, on this first occasion, raised the soldiers confidence to a degree of enthusiasm. Every man that had served under his father repaired to him with the greatest alacrity. Above all, the Agows of Lasta came down to him in great troops from their rugged and inaccessible mountains, the chief of that warlike nation being related to him by his mother.

The king in person at the head of his army became now an object of such consideration as to make the Mahometan chiefs no longer retire as usual to winter in Adel, but canton themselves in the several districts they had conquered in Abyssinia, and lay aside the thoughts of farther wasting the country, to defend themselves against so active and spirited an assailant. They agreed then to join their whole forces together, and march to force the king to a battle. Osman of Ganze, vizir Mudgid who
had

had settled in Amhara, Saber-eddin*, and all the lesser rebel officers of Sire and Serawe, effected a junction about the same time without opposition. Jonathan alone, a rebel of great experience, had not yet appeared with his troops. The king, on the other hand, did not seem over anxious to come to an engagement, though his army was every day ready for battle; and his ground was always taken with advantage, so that it was almost desperate to pretend to force him.

Jonathan at last was on his way to join the confederates; but the king had as early intelligence of his motions as his friends: and, while he was yet two days march distant from the camp, the king, leaving his tents standing and his fires lighted, by a forced march in the night came upon him, (while he thought him blocked up by his rebel associates at a distance) and, finding Jonathan without preparation or defence, cut his whole army to pieces, slew him, and then returned to his own tents as rapidly as he went, having ordered small detachments to continue in the way between him and his camp, patrolling, lest some ambush should be laid for him by the enemy, who, if they had been informed of his march, though they were too late to prevent the success of it, might still have attempted to revenge it.

But intelligence was now given to the Moors with much less punctuality and alacrity than formerly. So generally did the king possess the affections of the country people, that no information

came

* Constant in the faith.

came to the confederate army till the next day after his return, when, early in the morning, he dispatched one of the Moorish prisoners that he had taken three days before, and spared for the purpose, carrying with him the head of Jonathan, and a full account of the havock to which he had been a witness.

This messenger bore also the king's defiance to the Moors, whom he challenged, under the odious epithets they deserved, to meet him; and then actually to shew he was in earnest, marched towards them with his army, which he formed in order of battle. But tho' they stood under arms for a considerable time, whilst several invitations to single combat were sent from the Christian horsemen; as their custom is, before they engage; or when their camps are near each other, yet the Moors were so astonished at what had happened, and what they saw now before them, that not one officer would advise the risking a battle, nor any one soldier accept of the challenge offered. The king then returned to his camp, distributed the whole booty among his soldiers, and refreshed them, preserving a proper station to cover the wounded, whom he sent off to places of security.

The king was in the country of Samen in the neighbourhood of Lasta. He then decamped and passed the river Tacazze, that he might be nearer those districts of which the Turks had possessed themselves. In this march all sorts of people joined the victorious army. Those that had revolted, and many that had apostatized, came without fear and surrendered themselves, trusting to the clemency

mency of the prince. Many of the Moors, natives of Abyffinia, did the fame, after having experienced the difference between the mild Christian government, and that of their new masters, the Moors and Turks of Adel.

The king encamped at Sard, there to pafs his Easter; and, as is usual in the great festivals, many of the nobility obtained leave to attend the religious offices of the season at home with their families. Ammer, governor of Ganze, who knew the custom of the country, thought this was the time to surprife the king thinly attended; and it might have fucceeded, if intelligence of the enemy's defigns had not been received almost as foon as they were formed. Claudius, therefore, drawing together fome of the beft of his forces, placed himself in ambush in Ammer's way, who, not fufpecting, fell into it with his army, which was totally destroyed on the 24th of April 1541. After which the king left his own quarter at Sard and came to Shume.

While things were taking this favourable turn in Abyffinia, the ambaffador, John Bermudes, had paffed from Rome to Lisbon, where he was acknowledged by the king as patriarch of Alexandria, Abyffinia, and, as he will have it, of the Sea. The first thing he did was to give the Portuguese a sample of Abyffinian difcipline, by putting Zaga Zaab in irons for having waftef fo much of his time without effecting any of the purpofes of his embaffy; but, by the interpofition of the king, he was fet at liberty in a few days. Bermudes then fell roundly to the fubject of his embaffy, and drew fuch

such a picture of the distresses of Abyssinia, and insisted in his own blunt way so violently with the king of Portugal, and the nobility in general, that he procured an order from the king for Don Garcia de Noronha, who was then going out viceroy of the Indies, to send 400 Portuguese musqueteers from India to the relief of Abyssinia, and to land them at Masuah.

John Bermudes, to secure the assistance promised, resolved to embark in the same fleet with Don Garcia; but he fell sick, from poison given him, as he apprehends, by Zaga Zaab, and this delayed his embarkation a year. The next year, being recovered of his illness, he arrived safely at India. In the interim Don Garcia died, and Don Stephen de Gama, who succeeded him, did not embrace the scheme of the intended succour with such eagerness as Bermudes could have wished.

After some delay, however, it was resolved that Don Stephen should himself undertake an expedition from India, to burn the Turkish gallies that were at Suez. In this, however, Don Stephen was disappointed. Upon intelligence of the intended visit, the Turkish gallies had been all drawn ashore. He came after this to the port of Masuah, where the fleet intended to water; and, for that purpose, their boats were sent to Arkeeko, a small town and fortress upon the main-land, where good water may be found. But the Moors and Turks from Zeyla and Adel were now masters there, who took the 1000 webs of cotton-cloth the captain had sent to exchange for water and provisions, and sent him word back, that his master, the king of Adel, was

now king of all Ethiopia, and would not suffer any further trade to be carried on, but through his subjects; if, therefore, the captain of the fleet would make peace with him, he should restore the cotton-webs which had been taken, supply him plentifully with provisions, and make amends for the sixty Portuguese slain on the coast near Zeyla: For, upon the fleet's entering the Red Sea, this number of Portuguese had run away with a boat; and, landing in the kingdom of Adel, where they could procure no water, they were decoyed to give up their arms, and were then all massacred.

The captain, Don Stephen, saw the trap laid for him by the Moors, and, resolving to pay them in their own coin, he returned this answer to their message, "That he was very willing to trade with the Moorish officer, but did not demand restitution of the clothes, as they were taken in fair war. As for the sixty Portuguese, they had met the death they deserved, as being traitors and deserters: That he now sent a thousand more clothes, desiring water and provisions, especially live cattle; and that, as it was now the time of their festival, he would treat with them for peace, and bring his goods ashore as soon as the holidays were over."

This being agreed to on both sides, with equal bad faith and intention towards each other, and Don Stephen having obtained his refreshments, he strictly forbade any further communication with the shore. He then selected a body of six hundred men, the command of whom he gave to Martin Correa, who, in light boats, without shewing any fire, landed undiscovered below Arkeeko, and took possession

possession of the entrances to the town, putting all that they met with to the sword. Nur, governor of the province for the king of Adel, fled as soon as he had heard the Portuguese were in the town: He was already in the fields, when Martin Correa shot him with a musquet, and cut off his head, which was sent before them to the queen, Sabel Wenghel, then in a strong-hold of the province of Tigre, and with her Degdeasmati (which in common discourse, is called *Kasmati*) Robel. This was the person of that name who had met Don Roderigo in his journey to find the king, and who was now governor of the province. The queen received the Moorish general's head with great demonstrations of joy, considering it as an early pledge of future victories.

In the mean time, Don Stephen de Gama, captain of the fleet, began to enrol the men destined to march to join Claudius. Four hundred and fifty musqueteers was the number granted by the king to Bermudes; but an ardent desire of glory had seized all the Portuguese, and every one strove to be in the nomination for that enterprize. All that Don Stephen could do was to choose men of the first rank for the officers; and these, of necessity, having many servants whom they carried with them, greatly, by this means, encreased the number beyond the 450. Don Christopher de Gama, Don Stephen's youngest brother, a nobleman of great hopes, was chosen to command this small army of heroes.

A very great murmuring, nevertheless, prevailed among those that were refused, which was scarcely kept in due bounds by the presence and authority

of the governor Don Stephen himself. And from this honourable emulation, and the discontent these brave foldiers who were left behind shewed, the bay where the galleys rode in the harbour of Mafuah, on board which this council was held, is called to this day *Bahia dos Agravados*, the Bay of Wronged or Injured People, sometimes misinterpreted the Bay of *the Sick*.

The army under Don Christopher marched to Arkeeko, where the next day came the Governor Don Stephen, and the principal officers of the fleet, and took leave of their countrymen; and, after receiving the blessing of Don John Bermudes, *Patriarch of the Sea*, the governor and rest of the Portuguese embarked, and returned to India.

Don Christopher, with the greatest intrepidity, began his march towards Dobarwa, the easiest entrance into Abyssinia, though still over rugged and almost inaccessible mountains. The Baharnagash had orders to attend him, and furnish this little army with cattle both for their provision and carriages; and this he actually performed. But the carriages of the small train of artillery giving way in this bad road, and there being nobody at hand to assist them with fresh ones in case the old failed, Gama made certain carriages of wood after the pattern of those they had brought from Portugal; and, as iron was a very scarce commodity in Abyssinia, he made them split in pieces some barrels of old and useless firelocks for the wheels with which they were to draw the artillery.

The queen, without delay, came forward to join Don Christopher; who, hearing she was at hand, went

went to meet her a league from the city with drums beating and colours flying, and saluted her with a general discharge of fire-arms, which terrified her much. Her two sisters accompanied her, and a number of attendants of both sexes. Don Christopher, at the head of his soldiers, paid his compliments with equal gallantry and respect. The queen was covered from head to foot, but lifted up her veil, so that her face could be seen by him; and he, on the other hand, appointed a hundred musqueteers for her guard; and thus they returned to Dobarwa mutually satisfied with this their first interview.

Don Christopher marched from Dobarwa eight days through a very rugged country, endeavouring, if possible, to bring about a junction with the king. And it was in this place, while he was encamped, that he received a message from the Moorish general, full of opprobrious expressions, which was answered in much the same manner. Don Christopher continued his march as much as he could on account of the rains; and Gagne, whose greatest desire was to prevent the junction, followed him into Tigre. Neither army desired to avoid the other, and they were both marching to the same point; so that on the 25th of March 1542, they came in fight of each other at Ainal, a small village in the country of the Baharnagash.

The Moorish army consisted of 1000 horsemen, 5000 foot, 50 Turkish musqueteers, and a few pieces of artillery. Don Christopher, besides his 450 musqueteers, had about 12,000 Abyssinians, mostly foot, with a few bad horse commanded by the Baharnagash,

harnagash, and Robel governor of Tigre. Don Christopher, whose principal view was a junction with the king, though he did not decline fighting, yet, like a good officer, he chose to do it as much as possible upon his own terms; and, therefore, as the enemy exceeded greatly in the number of horse, he posted himself so as to make the best of his fire-arms and artillery. And well it was that he did so, for the Abyssinians shewed the utmost terror when the firing began on both sides.

Gragne, mounted on a bay horse, advancing too near Don Christopher's line that he might see if in any part it was accessible to his cavalry, and being known by his dress to be an officer of distinction, he was shot at by Peter de Sa, a Portuguese marksman, who killed his horse, and wounded the rider in the leg. This occasioned a great confusion, and would probably have ended in a defeat of the Moors, had not the Portuguese general also been wounded immediately after by a shot. Don Christopher, to shew his confidence of victory, ordered his men forthwith to pitch their tents, upon which the Moors retired with Gragne (whom they had mounted on another horse) without being pursued, the Abyssinians having contented themselves with being spectators of the battle.

Don Christopher, with his army and the empress, now entered into winter-quarters at Affalo; nor did Gragne depart to any distance from him, but took up his quarters at Zabul, in hopes always to fight the Portuguese before it was possible for them to effect a junction with the king. The winter passed in a mutual intercourse of correspondence
and

and confidence between the king and Don Christopher, and in determining upon the best scheme to pursue the war with success. Don Christopher and the queen were both of opinion, that, considering the small number of Portuguese first landed, and their diminution by fighting, and a strange climate, it was risking every thing to defer a junction till the winter was over.

The Moorish general was perfectly of the same opinion; therefore, as soon as the king began his march from Dembea, Gragne advanced to Don Christopher's camp, and placed himself between the Portuguese army and that of the king, drawing up his troops before the camp, and defying the Portuguese to march out, and fight, in the most opprobrious language. Don Christopher, in a long catalogue of virtues which he possessed to a very eminent degree, had not the smallest claim to that of patience, so very necessary to those that command armies. He was brave to a fault; rash and vehement; jealous of what he thought military honour; and obstinate in his resolutions, which he formed in consequence. The defiance of this barbarian, at which an old general would have laughed, made him utterly forget the reasons he himself frequently alleged, and the arguments used by the queen, which the king's approach daily strengthened, that it was risking every thing to come to a battle till the two armies had joined. He had, however, from no other motive but Gragne's insolence, formed his resolution to fight, without waiting a junction; and accordingly the 30th of August, early in the morning, having chosen his ground

to the best advantage, he offered battle to the Moorish army.

Gragne, by presents sent to the basha of Zibid, had doubled his number of horse, which now consisted of 2000. He had got likewise 100 Turkish musqueteers, an infinite number of foot, and a train of artillery more numerous and complete than ever had been seen before in Abyssinia. The queen, frightened at the preparation for the battle, fled, taking with her the Portuguese patriarch, who seemed to have as little inclination as she had to see the issue of the day. But Don Christopher, who knew well the bad effects this example would have, both on Abyssinians and Portuguese, sent twenty horse, and brought them both back; telling the patriarch it was a breach of duty he would not suffer, for him to withdraw until he had confessed him, and given the army absolution before the action with the Infidels.

The battle was fought on the 30th of August with great fury and obstinacy on both sides. The Portuguese had strewed, early in the morning, all the front of their line with gun-powder, to which, on the approach of the Turks, they set fire by trains, which burnt and disabled a great many of them; and things bore a prosperous appearance, till the Moorish general ordered some artillery to be pointed against the Abyssinians, who, upon hearing the first explosion, and seeing the effect of some balls that had lighted among them, fled, and left the Portuguese to the number only of 400, who were immediately surrounded by the Moorish army. Nor did Gragne pursue the fugitives, his af-

fair being with the Portuguese, the smallness of whose number promised they would fall an easy and certain sacrifice. He therefore, attacked their camp upon every side with very little success, having lost most of his best officers, till, unfortunately, Don Christopher, fighting and exposing himself every where, was singled out by a Turkish soldier, and shot through the arm. Upon this all his men turned their thoughts from their own preservation to that of their general, who obstinately refused to fly, till he was by force put upon a litter, and sent off, together with the patriarch and queen.

Night now coming on, Don Christopher had got into a wood in which there was a cave. There he ordered himself to be set down to have his wounds dressed; which, being done, he was urged by the queen and patriarch to continue his flight. But he had formed his resolution, and, without deigning to give his reasons, he obstinately refused to retreat a step farther. In vain the queen, and those that knew the country, told him he was just in the tract of the Moorish horsemen, who would not fail soon to surround him. He repeated his resolution of staying there with such a degree of firmness, that the queen and patriarch, who had no great desire for martyrdom, left him to his fate, which presently overtook him.

In one of Don Christopher's expeditions to the mountains, he had taken a very beautiful woman, wife to a Turkish officer, whom he had slain. This lady had made a shew of conversion to Christianity; lived with him afterwards, and was treated by him with the utmost tenderness. It was said, that,

after he was wounded and began to fly, this woman had given him his route, and promised to overtake him with friends that would carry him to a place of safety. Accordingly, some servants left by the queen, hidden among the rocks, to watch what might befall him, and assist him if possible, saw a woman, in the dawn of the morning, come to the cave, and return into the wood immediately, whence there rushed out a body of Moorish horse, who went straight to the cave and found Don Christopher lying upon the ground sorely wounded. Upon the first question that was asked him, he declared his name, which so overjoyed the Moors, that they gave over further pursuit, and returned with the prisoner they had taken. Don Christopher was brought into the presence of the Moorish general, Gagne, who loaded him with reproaches; to which he replied with such a share of invectives, that the Moor, in the violence of his passion, drew his sword and cut off his head with his own hand. His head was sent to Constantinople, and parts of his body to Zibid and other quarters of Arabia.

The Portuguese camp was now taken, and all the wounded found in it were put to death. The women, from their fear, having retired all into Don Christopher's tent, the Turks began to indulge themselves in their usual excesses towards their captives, when a noble Abyssinian woman, who had been married to a Portuguese, seeing the shocking treatment that was awaiting them, set fire to several barrels of gunpowder that were in the tent, and

and at once destroyed herself, her companions, and those that were about to abuse them.

The queen and the patriarch, after travelling through most difficult ways, and being hospitably entertained wherever they passed, at last took up their residence in the Jews mountain, a place inaccessible in point of strength, having but one entrance, and that very difficult, being also defended by a multitude of inhabitants who dwell on a large plain on the top of that mountain, where there is plenty of space to plow and sow, and a large stream of water that runs through the whole of it. Here they staid two months, as well to repose themselves as to give the king time to relieve them. After hearing that he was in motion, they left the mountain of the Jews, and met him on his march towards them.

Claudius shewed great signs of sorrow for the death of Don Christopher, and mourned three days. He then sent 3000 ounces of gold to be divided among the Portuguese, who, in the place of Don Christopher, had elected Alphonso Caldeyra for their captain. These all flocked about the king, demanding that he would lead them to battle, that they might revenge the death of Don Christopher. Soon after which, Alphonso Caldeyra, exercising a horse in the field, was thrown off and died of the fall. In his place was elected Arius Dias, a Portuguese, born at Coimbra, whose mother was a black; he was very much favoured by the king, who now began to cultivate particular parties among the Portuguese, in order to divide them, and loosen their

attachment for their patriarch, religion, and country.

The king marched from Samen to Shawada, where the Moorish army came in full force to meet him. They were not, however, those formidable troops that had defeated and taken Don Christopher: For the Turkish soldiers, who were the strength of the army, expecting to have shared a great sum each for Don Christopher's ransom thought themselves exceedingly injured by the manner in which he was put to death; and they had accordingly all to a man returned into Arabia, leaving Gagné to fight his own battles for his own profit. Nor was Claudius ignorant of this; and having collected all his army he gave the Moors battle on the 15th of November in a plain called Woggora, on the top of Lamalmon, in which the Moors, notwithstanding their recent victory, were not long in yielding to the superiority of the king's troops.

The loss of the day was not inconsiderable. Mahomet, Osman, and Talil, three Moorish leaders, famous for their successes against David the king's father, were this day slain in the field.

Claudius now descended into the low country of Dersegué, a very plentiful province, to which the Moors always retreated to strengthen themselves after any misfortune. This the king utterly destroyed; while Gagné did the same with those countries in Dembea that had been recovered by the king. Claudius then returned to Shawada, and Gagné to Dersegué. After that the king marched to Wainadega, and Gagné, leaving Dersegué, ad-

vanced

vanced so near the king's army, that the outposts were nearly in sight of each other. In such a position of two such armies a battle became inevitable.

Accordingly, on the 10th of Feb. 1543, in the morning, the king, whose quarters were at Isaac's Bet, having well refreshed his army, marched out of his camp, and offered the enemy battle. The Portuguese, ever mindful of Don Christopher, fought with a bravery like to desperation, and the presence of the king keeping the Abyssinians in their duty, the van of Gragne's army was pushed back upon the centre, and much confusion was like to follow, till Gragne advanced alone before them, waving and beckoning with his hands to his men that they should follow; and he was already come so near the Portuguese line as to be easily known and distinguished by them.

Peter Lyon, a man of low stature, but very active and valiant, who had been valet-de-chambre to Don Christopher, having crept unseen along the course of a river a considerable space nearer, to make his aim more certain, shot Gragne with his musquet, so that the ball went through his body in the moment that both armies joined. Gragne, finding that his wound was mortal, rode aside from the pressure of the troops towards a small thicket, and was closely followed by Peter Lyon, who saw him fall dead from his horse; and, desirous still to do further service in the battle, he would not incumber himself with his head, but cutting off one of the ears, he put it in his pocket, and returned to the action. The Moorish army no sooner miss-
ed

ed the presence of their general, than concluding all lost, they fell into confusion, and were pursued by the Portuguese and Abyssinians with a great slaughter, till the evening.

The next morning, in surveying the dead, the body of Gagne was found by an Abyssinian officer, who cut his head off, and brought it to the king, who received him with great honour and promise of reward. Peter Lyon stood a silent spectator of the impudence of his competitor; but Arius Dias, who knew the fact, desired the king's attention, saying, at the same time, "That he believed his majesty knew Gagne well enough to suppose that he would not suffer any man to cut off his ear, without having it in his power to sever his head also; and consequently, that the ear must be in possession of a better man than he that had brought his head to the camp." Upon this, Peter Lyon pulled the ear out of his pocket, and laid it at the king's feet, amidst the acclamations of all present, for his bravery in revenging his old master's death, and his modesty in being content with having done so, without pretending to any other reward.

In this battle, a son of Gagne was taken prisoner, with many other considerable officers; and Del Wumbarea, wife of Gagne, with Nur son of Mudgid, and a few troops, were obliged to throw themselves, for safety, among the wilds and woods of Atbara, thereby escaping with great difficulty.

The king had now ample revenge of all the Moorish leaders who had reduced his father to such extremities, excepting Joram who had driven the king from his hiding-place on mount Tfalem, and forced

forced him to cross the Tacazze on foot, with equal danger of being drowned or taken. This leader had, much against his will, been detained from the last battle, but, hoping to be still in time, was advancing by forced marches. The king, informed of his route, detached a party of his army to meet him before the news of the battle could reach him. They having placed themselves in ambush, he fell into it with his army, and was cut to pieces: this completed Claudius's account with his father's enemies.

During the late war with Gragne, the provinces of Tigre and Sire had been the principal seat of the war. They were immediately in the way between Dembea, Masuah, and the other Moorish posts upon the Red Sea; the enemy had crossed them in all directions, and a proportionable devastation had been the consequence. Gragne had burnt Axum, and destroyed all the churches and convents in Tigre. The king, now delivered from this enemy, had applied seriously to repair the ravages which had been made in the country. For this purpose he marched with a small army towards Axum, intending afterwards an expedition against the Galla.

It was in the 13th year of the reign of Claudius, while he was at Sire, that there happened a very remarkable eclipse of the sun, which threw both court and army into great consternation. The prophets and diviners, ignorant monks of the desert, did not let slip so favourable an opportunity of increasing their consequence by augmenting this panic, and declaring this eclipse to portend nothing less than the renewal of the Moorish war. The
year,

year, however, passed in tranquillity and peace. Two old women, relations of the king, are said to have died; and it was in this great calamity that these diviners were to look for the completion of their prophecies. It is from this, however, that I have taken an opportunity to compare and rectify the dates of the principal transactions in the Abyssinian history. Sire, where the king then resided, was a point very favourable for this application; for in my journey from Masuah to Gondar, I had settled the latitude and longitude of that town by many observations.

On the 22d of January 1770, at night, by a medium of different passages of stars over the meridian, and by an observation of the sun the noon of the following day, I found the latitude to be $14^{\circ} 4' 35''$ north, and the evening of the 23d, I observed an emersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, and by this I concluded the longitude of Sire to be $38^{\circ} 0' 15''$ east of the meridian of Greenwich.

The 13th year of the reign of Claudius falls to be in the 1553, and I find that there was a remarkable eclipse of the sun that did happen that same year on the 24th of January N. S. which answers to the 18th of the Ethiopic month Teir. The circumstances of this eclipse were as follow:

	H.	M.	S.
Beginning, -	7	21	0 A. M.
Middle, -	8	40	0
End, -	10	1	0

The quantity of the sun's disk obscured was 10 digits; so that this was so near to a total eclipse, it must

must have made an impression on the spectator's minds that sufficiently accounts for the alarm and apprehensions it occasioned.

In the month of January, nothing can be more beautiful than the sky in Sire; not a cloud appears; the sky is all of a pale azure, the colour lighter than an European sky, and of inexpressible beauty. The manner of applying this eclipse, I shall mention hereafter.

Eclipses of the moon do not seem to be attended to in Abyssinia. The people are very little out in the night, inasmuch that I do not find one of these recorded throughout their history. The circumstances of the season make even those of the sun seldom visible than in other climates, for in the rainy season, from April to September, the heavens are constantly overcast with clouds, so that it is mere accident if they can catch the moment it happens. But in the month of Teir, that is December and January, the sky is perfectly serene and clear, and at this time our eclipse above mentioned happened.

The king now took into his consideration the state of the church. He had sent for an Abuna from Cairo to succeed Abuna Marcus, and he was now in his way to Abyssinia, while Bermudes, not able to bear this slight, on the other hand, publicly declared to the king, that, having been ambassador from his father, and made his submission to the Roman pontiff, for himself and for his kingdom, he now expected that Claudius would make good his father's engagements, embrace the Roman Catholic religion himself, and, without delay, proclaim it as

the established religion in Abyssinia. This the king positively refused to do, and a conversation ensued; which is repeated by Bermudes himself, and sufficiently shews the moderation of the young king, and the fiery, brutal zeal of that ignorant, bigotted, ill-mannered priest. Hitherto the Abyssinians heard the Portuguese mass with reverence and attention; and the Portuguese frequented the Abyssinian churches with complacency. They intermarried with each other, and the children seem to have been christened indifferently by the priests of either church. And this might have long continued, had it not been for the impatience of Bermudes.

The king, seeing the danger of connecting himself with such a man, kept up every appearance of attachment to the Alexandrian church. Yet, says the Abyssinian historian who writes his life, it was well known that Claudius, in his heart, was a private, but perfect convert, to the Romish faith, and kept only from embracing it by his hatred to Bermudes, the constant persuasion of the empress Sabel Wenghel, and the recollection of the misfortunes of his father. Upon being required publicly to submit himself to the See of Rome, he declared that he had made no such promise; that he considered Bermudes as no patriarch, or, at best, only patriarch of the Franks; and that the Abuna of Abyssinia was the chief priest acknowledged by him. Bermudes told him, that he was accursed and excommunicated. Claudius answered, that he, Bermudes, was a Nestorian heretic, and worshipped four gods. Bermudes answered plainly, that he lied; that he would take every Portuguese from him.

him, and return to India whence he came. The king's answer was, that he wished he would return to India ; but as for the Portuguese, neither they, nor any other person should leave his kingdom without his permission. Accordingly, having perfectly gained Arius Dias, he gave him the name of Marcus, with the command of the Portuguese, and sent him a standard with his own arms, to use instead of the king of Portugal's. But the Abyssinian page being met, on his return, with the Portuguese standard in his hand, by James Brito, he wrested it from him, felling him to the ground with a blow of his sword on the head.

From expostulations with the king, the matter of religion turned into disputes among the priests, at which the king always assisted in person. If we suppose they were no better sustained on the part of the Abyssinians than they were by the patriarch Bermudes, who we know was no great divine, we cannot expect much that was edifying from the arguments that either of them used. The Portuguese say *, that the king, struck with the ignorance of his own clergy, frequently took the discussion upon himself, which he managed with such force of reasoning as often to put the patriarch to a stand. From verbal disputes, which terminated in nothing, Bermudes was resolved to appeal to arguments in writing; and, with the help of those that were with him of the same faith, a fair state of the differences in question was made in a small book, and presented to the king, who read it with so much pleasure

* Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 27.

pleasure that he kept it constantly by him. This gave very great offence to the Abyssinian clergy; and the Abuna being now arrived, the king desired of him liberty to read that book, which he refusing, put the young king into so violent a passion that he called the Abuna Mahometan and Infidel to his face.

Things growing worse and worse between the Portuguese and Abyssinians, by the incendiary spirit of the brutish Bermudes, from reproaches they came to blows; and this proceeded so far, that the Portuguese one night assaulted the king's tent, where they slew some, and grievously wounded others. Upon this, the king, desirous to estrange him a little from the Portuguese, sent Bermudes to the country of the Gafats, where he gave him large appointments, in hopes that the natural turbulence of his temper would involve him in some difficulties. And there he staid seven months, oppressing the poor ignorant people, and frightening them with the noise of his fire-arms. During this period, the king went on an expedition against the Galla; Bermudes then returned to court, where he found that Arius Dias was dead, and a great many of the Portuguese very well attached to the king. But he began his old work of dissention, insomuch that the king determined to banish him to a mountain for life.

Gaspar de Suza now commanded the Portuguese instead of Arius Dias, a man equally beloved by his own nation and the king. By his persuasions, and that of Kasmati Robel, the banishment to the mountain was laid aside; but Bermudes was privately

vately persuaded to embark for India while it was yet time; and accordingly he repaired to Dobarwa, where he remained two years, as it should seem, perfectly quiet, neglected, and forlorn; saying daily mass to ten Portuguese who had settled in that town after the defeat of Don Christopher. He then went to Masuah, and the monsoon being favourable, he embarked on board a Portuguese vessel, carrying with him the ten Portuguese that were settled at Dobarwa, who all arrived safely at Goa.

St. Ignatius, founder of the Order of Jesuits, was then at Rome in the dawn of his holiness. The conversion of Abyssinia seemed of such consequence to him, that he resolved himself to go and be the apostle of the kingdom. But the pope, who had conceived other hopes of him and his Order more important and nearer at hand, absolutely refused this offer. One of his society, Nugnez Baretto, was, however, fixed upon for patriarch, without any notice being taken of Don John Bermudes. By him Ignatius sent a letter addressed to Claudius, which is to be found in the Collections*. It does not, I think, give us any idea of the ingenuity or invention of that great saint. It seems mostly to beg the question, and to contain little else than texts of scripture for his future missionaries to preach and write on, relative to the difference of tenets of the two churches.

With this letter, and a number of priests, Baretto came to Goa. But news being arrived there of king Claudius's steady aversion to the Catholic church,

* Dated at Rome 16th Feb. 1555. See Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 22.

church, it was then thought better, rather than risk the patriarchal dignity, to send Andrew Oviedo bishop of Hierapolis, and Melchior Carneyro bishop of Nice, with several other priests, as ambassadors from the governor of India to Claudius, with proper credentials. They arrived safely at Masuah in 1558, five days before the Turkish basha came with his fleet and army, and took possession of Masuah and Arkeeko, though these places had been occupied by the Turks two years before.

When the arrival of these Portuguese was intimated to Claudius, he was exceedingly glad, as he considered them as an accession of strength. But when, on opening the letter, he saw they were priests, he was very much troubled, and said, that he wondered the king of Portugal should meddle so much with his affairs; that he and his predecessors knew no obedience due but to the chair of St. Mark, or acknowledged any other patriarch but that of Alexandria; nevertheless, continued he with his usual goodness and moderation, since they are come so far out of an honest concern for me, I shall not fail to send proper persons to receive and conduct them. This he did, and the two bishops and their companions were immediately brought to court. It was at this time that the dispute about the two natures began, in which the king took so considerable a part. He was strenuous, eloquent, and vehement in the discussion; when that was ended, he still preserved his usual moderation and kindness for the Portuguese priests.

Nugnez died in India, and Oviedo succeeded him as patriarch to Abyssinia, it having been so appointed by the pope from the beginning of their mission.

Claudius had no children; a treaty was therefore set on foot, at the instance of the empress Sabel Wenghel, for ransoming the prince Menas who had been taken prisoner in his father David's time, and ever since kept in confinement among the Moors, upon a high mountain in Adel. The same had happened to a son of Gagne likewise, made prisoner at the battle of Wainadega, when his father was slain by Claudius. The Moors settled in Abyssinia, as well as all the Abyssinian rebels who had forsaken their allegiance or religion during the war, were to a man violently against setting Menas at liberty, for he was the only brother Claudius had, and a disputed succession was otherwise probable, which was what the Moors longed for. Besides this, Menas was exceedingly brave, of a severe and cruel temper, a mortal enemy to the Mahometans, and at this time in the flower of his age, and perfectly fit to govern. It was not, then, by any means, an eligible measure for those who were naturally the objects of his hatred, to provide such an assistant and successor to Claudius.

Del Wumbarea thought, that, having lost her husband, to be deprived of her son likewise, was more than fell to her share in the common cause. She, too, had therefore applied to the basha of Masuah, who looked no farther than to a ransom, and cared very little what prince reigned in Abyssinia. He, therefore, undertook the management of the matter,

matter, and declared that he would fend Menas to the Grand Signior, as soon as an answer should come from Constantinople, while Claudius protested, that he would give up Gragne's son to the Portuguese, if the ransom for his brother was not immediately agreed on. This resolution, on both sides, quickly removed all objections. Four thousand ounces of gold were paid to the Moors and the basha; Menas was released and sent home to Claudius, who thereupon, in his turn, set Ali Gerad, son of Gragne by Del Wumbarea, at liberty, and with him Waraba Guta brother of the king of Adel, and this finished the transaction.

I must here observe, that what Bermudes * says, that Del Wumbarea was taken prisoner and given in marriage to Arius Dias, was but a fable, as appears both from the beginning and sequel of the narrative. Del Wumbarea having thus obtained her son, took a very early opportunity of shewing she had not yet forgot the father. Nur, governor of Zeyla, son of Mudgid, who had slain the princes imprisoned upon the mountain of Geshen, was deeply in love with this lady, and had deserved well of her, for he had assisted her in making her escape into Atbara that day her husband was slain. But this heroine had constantly refused to listen to any proposals; nay, had vowed she never would give her hand in marriage to any man till he should first bring her the head of Claudius who had slain her husband. Nur willingly accepted the condition, which gave him few rivals, but rather seemed to

* See Bermudes's account of these times, printed at Lisbon by Francis Correa, A. D. 1565.

to be reserved for him, and out of the power of every one else.

Claudius, before this, had marched towards Adel, when he received a message from Nur, that, though Gragne was dead, there still remained a governor of Zeyla, whose family was chosen as a particular instrument for shedding the blood of the Abyssinian princes; and desired him, therefore, to be prepared, for he was speedily to set out to come to him. Claudius had been employed in various journies through different parts of his kingdom, repairing the churches which Gragne and the other Moors had burnt; and he was then rebuilding that of Debra Werk † when this message of Nur was brought to him. This prince was of a temper never to avoid a challenge; and if he did not march against Nur immediately, he staid no longer than to complete his army as far as possible. He then began his march for Adel, very much, as it is said, against the advice of his friends.

That such advice should be given, at this particular time, appears strange; for till now he had been constantly victorious, and his kingdom was perfectly obedient, which was not the case when any one of the former battles had been fought. But many prophecies were current in the camp, that the king was to be unfortunate this campaign, and was to lose his life in it. These unfortunate rumours tended much to discourage the army, at the same time that they seemed to have a contrary effect on the king, and to confirm him in his reso-

† The Mountain of Gold.

lution to fight. The truth is, the clergy, who had seen the country delivered by him from the Mahometans in a manner almost miraculous, and the constancy with which he withstood the Romish patriarch, and frustrated the designs of his father against the Alexandrian church, and who had experienced his extreme liberality in rebuilding the churches, had wrought his young mind to such a degree of enthusiasm that he was often heard to say, he preferred a death in the middle of an army of infidels to the longest and most prosperous life that ever fell to the lot of man. It needed not a prophet to have foretold the likely issue of a battle in these circumstances, where the king, careless of life, rather sought death than victory; where the number of Portuguese was so small as to be incapable, of themselves, to effect any thing; where, even of that number, those that were attached to the king were looked upon as traitors by those of the party of the patriarch; and where the Abyssinians, from their repeated quarrels and disputes, heartily hated them all.

The armies were drawn up and ready to engage, when the chief priest of Debra Libanos came to the king to tell him a dream, or vision, which warned him not to fight; but the Moors were then advancing, and the king on horseback made no reply, but marched briskly forward to the enemy. The cowardly Abyssinians, upon the first fire, fled, leaving the king engaged in the middle of the Moorish army with twenty horse and eighteen Portuguese musqueteers, who were all slain around his person; and he himself fell, after fighting manfully,

and

and receiving twenty wounds. His head was cut off, and by Nur delivered to Del Wumbarea, who directed it to be tied by the hair to a branch of a tree before her door, that she might keep it constantly in sight. Here it remained three years, till it was purchased from her by an Armenian merchant, her first grief, having, it is probable, subsided upon the acquisition of a new husband. The merchant carried the head to Antioch, and buried it there in the sepulchre of a saint of the same name.

Thus died king Claudius in the 19th year of his reign, who, by his virtues and capaciety, might hold a first place among any series of kings we have known, victorious in every action he fought, except in that one only in which he died. A great slaughter was made after this among the routed, and many of the first nobility were slain in endeavouring to escape; among the rest, the dreamer from Debra Lebanos, his vision, by which he knew the king's death, not having extended so far as to reveal his own. The Abyssinians immediately transferred the name of this prince into their catalogue of Saints, and he is called St. Claudius in that country to this day. Though endowed with every other virtue that entitled him to his place in the kalendar, he seems to have wanted one—that of dying in charity with his enemies.

This battle was fought on the 22d March 1559; and the victory gained by Nur was a complete one. The king and most of his principal officers were slain; great part of the army taken prisoners, the rest dispersed, and the camp plundered; so that no Moorish general had ever returned home with the

glory that he did. But afterwards, in his behaviour, he exhibited a spectacle more memorable, and that did him more honour than the victory itself; for, when he drew near to Adel, he clothed himself in poor attire like a common soldier, and bare-headed, mounted on an ordinary mule, with an old saddle and tattered accoutrements, he forbade the songs and praise with which it is usual to meet conquerors in that country when returning with victory from the field. He declined also all share in the success of that day, declaring that the whole of it was due to God alone, to whose mercy and immediate interposition he owed the destruction of the Christian army.

The unworthy and unfortunate John Bermudes having arrived in Portugal from India, continued there till his death; and, in the inscription over his tomb, is called only *Patriarch of Alexandria*. Yet it is clear, from the history of these times, that he was first ordained by the old patriarch Marcus; and that the pope, Paul III. only confirmed the ordination of this heretical schismatical prelate, though we have stated that he was ordained by the pope, according to his own assertion, to be patriarch of Alexandria, Abyssinia, and the Sea. Bermudes lived many years after this, and never resigned any of his charges.

However, on his arrival in Europe, several supposed well-meaning persons at Rome began to discourse among themselves, as if the conversion of Abyssinia had not had a fair trial when trusted in the hands of such a man as Bermudes. Scandalous stories as to his moral character were propagated at Rome to strengthen

en this. He was said to have stolen a golden cup in Abyffinia*; but this does not appear to me in any shape probable, or like the manners of the man. He was a simple, ill-bred zealot, exceedingly vain, but in no wise coveting riches or gain of any sort. Sébastian king of Portugal, hearing the bad posture of the Catholic religion in Abyffinia, and the small hopes of the conversion of that country, besought the pope to send all the missionaries that were in that kingdom to preach the gospel in Japan: but Oviedo stated such strong reasons in his letter to Rome, that he was confirmed in the mission of Ethiopia.

* Purch. vol. 2.

MENAS, OR ADAMAS SEGUED.

From 1559 to 1563.

Baharnagash rebels, proclaims Tascar King—Defeated by the King—Cedes Dobarwa to the Turks, and makes a League with the Basba of Masuah.

MENAS succeeded his brother Claudius, and found his kingdom in almost as great confusion as it had been left by his father David. His first campaign was against Radaet the Jew. The king attacked him at his strongest post in Samen, where he fought him with various success; and the enterprise did not seem much advanced, when a hermit, residing in these mountains, probably tired with the neighbourhood of such troublesome people, came and told the king, it had been revealed to him that the conquest of the Jews was not allotted to him, nor was their time yet come.

While the king seemed disposed to avail himself of the hermit's warning, as a decent excuse to get rid of an affair that did not succeed to his mind, an accident happened which determined him to quit his present undertaking. Two men, shepherds of Ebenaat in Belessen, from what injury is not known, engaged two of the king's servants, who were their relations, to introduce them into Menas's tent while sleeping, with a design to murder him in his bed. While they were preparing to execute their intention, one of them stumbled over the lamp that was burning, and threw it down.

down. The king awakening, and challenging him with a loud voice, the assassin struck at him with his knife, but so feebly, from the fright, that he dropt the weapon upon the king's cloak without hurting him. They fled immediately out of the tent, but were taken at Ebenaat the next day, and brought back to the king, who gave orders to the judges to try them: they were both condemned, the one to be thrust through with lances, the other to be stoned to death; after which, both their bodies were thrown to the dogs and to the beasts of the field, as is practised constantly in all cases of high-treason.

The second year of the reign of Menas was ushered in by a conspiracy among the principal men of his court, at the head of which was Isaac Baharnagash, an old and tried servant of his brother Claudius. This officer had been treated ill by Menas in the beginning of his reign; and, knowing the prince's violent and cruel disposition, he could not persuade himself that he was yet in safety.

Menas, to suppress this rebellion in its infancy, sent Zara Johannes, an old officer, before him, with what forces he could collect in the instant; but Isaac, informed of the bad state of that army, and consequently of his own superiority, left him no time to strengthen himself, but fell furiously upon him, and, with little resistance, dispersed his army. This loss did not discourage the king; he had assembled a very considerable force, and, desirous still to encrease it, he was advancing slowly that he might collect the scattered remains of the army
that

that had been defeated. The Baharnagash, though victorious, saw with some concern that he could not avoid the king, whose courage and capacity, both as a foldier and a general, left him every thing to fear for his success.

Ever since the massacre of the princes upon mount Geshen by vizir Mudgid, in the reign of David III. none of the remains of the royal family had been confined as heretofore. Tascar, Menas's nephew, was then at liberty, and, to strengthen his cause, was proclaimed king by the Baharnagash, soon after the defeat of Menas's army under Zara Johannes. He was a prince very mild and affable in his manners, in all respects very unlike his uncle then reigning.

It was on the 1st of July 1561, that the king attacked the Baharnagash in the plain of Woggora; and, having entirely routed his army, Tascar was taken prisoner, and ordered by the king his uncle to be carried to the brink of the high rock of Lamalmon, and, having been thrown over the steep precipice, he was dashed to pieces. Isaac himself escaped very narrowly, flying to the frontier of his government in the neighbourhood of Masuah. The Baharnagash comprehended distinctly to what a dangerous situation he was now reduced. No hopes of safety remained but in a peace with the basha. This at first appeared not easily obtained; for, while Isaac remained in his duty in the reign of Claudius, he had fought with the basha, and lost his brother in the engagement. But present necessity overcame the memory of past injuries.

Samur Basha was a man of capacity and temper; he had been in possession of Masuah ever since the year 1558. He saw his own evident interest in the measure, and appeared full as forward as the Baharnagash to complete it. Isaac ceded Dobarwa to the basha, and put him into immediate possession of it, and all the low country between that and Masuah. By this acquisition, the Turks, before masters of the sea-coast, became possessed of the whole of the flat country corresponding thereto, as far as the mountains. Dobarwa is a large trading town, situated in a country abounding with provisions of all kinds which Masuah wanted, and it was the key of the province of Tigre and the high land of Abyssinia.

Menas, at his accession, had received kindly the compliments of congratulation made by the Portuguese patriarch, Oviedo. But hearing that he still continued to preach, and that the effect of this was frequent divisions and animosities among the people, he called him into his presence, and strictly commanded him to desist, which the patriarch positively refusing, the king lost all patience, and fell violently upon him, beating him without mercy, tearing his clothes and beard, and taking his chalice from him, that he might prevent him from saying mass. He then banished him to a desert mountain, together with Francis Lopez, where for seven months he endured all manner of hardships.

The king, in the mean time, published many rigorous proclamations against the Portuguese. He would not permit them to marry with Abyssini-

ans. Those that were already married he forbade to go to the Catholic churches with their husbands; and, having again called the patriarch into his presence, he ordered him forthwith to leave his kingdom upon pain of death. But Oviedo, who seems to have had an ambition to be the proto-martyr, refused absolutely to obey these commands. He declared that the orders of God were those he obeyed, not the sinful ordinances of man; and, letting slip his cloak from his shoulders, he offered his bare neck to the king to strike. This answer and gesture so incensed Menas, that, drawing his sword, he would have very soon put the patriarch in possession of the martyrdom he coveted, had it not been for the interposition of the queen and officers that stood round him.

Oviedo, after having been again soundly beaten, was banished a second time to the mountain; and in this sentence were included all the rest of the Portuguese priests, as well as others. But the bishop would not submit to this punishment, but with the Portuguese, his countrymen, joined the Baharnagash, who had already completed his treaty with Samur Basfa.

Isaac, before the Portuguese priests, had shewn a desire of becoming Catholic, and of protecting, or even embracing, their religion; and they, on their part, had assured him of a powerful and speedy succour from India, which was just what he wanted; and with this view he had placed himself to the greatest advantage, avoiding a battle, and awaiting those auxiliaries, of the arrival of which the king was very apprehensive. But the

the season of ships coming from India had passed without any appearance of Portuguese, and the king was resolved to try his fortune without expecting what another season might produce. On the other hand, Isaac, strengthened by his league with the basha, thought himself in a condition to take the field, rather than to lessen his reputation by constantly declining battle.

In these dispositions both armies met, and the confederates were again beaten by the king, with very little loss or resistance. This battle was fought on the 20th of April 1562. Immediately after this victory the king marched to Shoa, and sent several detachments of his army before him to surprise the robbers called Dobas, and drive off their cattle. What he intended by retiring so far from his enemies, the Baharnagash and Basha, is what we do not know. Both of them were yet alive, but probably so weakened by their last defeat as to leave no apprehensions of being able to molest the country by any incursions.

The king, being advanced into the province of Ogge, was taken ill of the Kolla, or low-country fever, and, after a few days illness, he died there on the 13th of January 1563, leaving three sons, Sertza Denghel, who succeeded him, Tascar, and Lefano Christos.

Some European historians * have advanced that Menas was defeated and slain in this last engagement just now mentioned. This, however, is expressly contradicted in the annals of these times, which
mention

* Ludolf, lib. 2. cap. 6.

mention the death of the king in the terms I have here related; nor were either of the chiefs of the rebels, the Basha or Baharnagash, slain that day. The rebellion still continued, Isaac having proclaimed a prince of the name of John to be king in place of Tascar, his deceased brother.

Menas was a prince of a very morose and violent disposition, but very well adapted to the time in which he lived; brave in his person, active and attentive to the affairs of government. He was sober, and an enemy to all sorts of pleasure; frugal, and, in his dress or stile of living, little different from any soldier in his army.

These qualities made him feared by the great, without being beloved by the common soldiers accustomed to the liberality and magnificence of Claudius; and this want of popularity gave the Romish priests an opportunity to blacken his character beyond what in truth he deserved. Thus, they say, that he had changed his religion during his imprisonment, and turned Mahometan, and that it was from the Moors he learned that ferocity of manners. But to this the answer is easy, That the manners of his own countrymen, that is of mountaineers without any profession but war and blood, in which they had been exercised for centuries, were, probably of themselves, much more fierce and barbarous than any he could learn among the people of Adel, occupied from time immemorial in commerce and the pursuit of riches, and necessarily engaged in an honest intercourse, and practice of hospitality, with all the various nations that traded with them. Besides, were this otherwise,

otherwise, he never had any society with these Moors. Banishment to the top of a mountain* would have been his fate in Abyssinia, had he lived a few years earlier or later than he did. Yet the mountain upon which the royal family was confined had not yet produced one of such savage manners; and it is not probable that he was more strictly guarded in Adel than he would have been in his own country.

As to his religion, we can only say that he abhorred the Romish faith, from the behaviour of those that professed it; and, that he had abundant reason so to do, we need only appeal to their conduct in the preceding reign, according to the accounts given by the Catholics themselves. Let any man consider a king such as Claudius was; seated on his throne in the midst of his courtiers and captains; cursed and excommunicated; called heretic and liar to his face by an ignorant peasant and stranger, such as John Bermudes; attacked in the night, and forced to fly for his life by a body of strangers who depended upon him for their daily bread: Next consider Menas, at his first accession desiring their patriarch to desist from preaching a religion that was fatal to the quiet of his kingdom by sowing dissensions among it as it had done in the two preceding reigns; and then figure a fanatic priest, declaring that he would neither depart nor obey these orders; then say what would have been done to strangers in France, Spain, or Portugal, that had behaved in this manner to the sovereign
or

* To Geshen or Wechne.

or ministers of these countries. Add to this, that all the Portuguese to a man appeared in the army of a rebel subject in the last battle, supporting the cause of a pretender to his crown. If, upon a fair review of all this, it is any matter of surprize that he should be averse to such people and behaviour, I am no judge of the fair feelings of man, and the duty a prince owes to himself or posterity, his country or dignity.

As to his inclination to the Mahometan religion, the fact is, that he opposed it even with his sword during his whole reign, and never swerved from his attachment to the church of Alexandria, or his friendship and respect to the Abuna Yousef, to the end of his life, as far as we can learn from history. And least, of all people in the world, does it become the Roman Catholics to accuse him of being Mahometan, because a letter is still extant to Menas from pope Paul III. *, wherein the pope styles him beloved *son in Christ*, and the *most holy of priests*.

* See Le Grande's History of Abyssinia.

SERTZA DENGHEL, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1563 to 1595.

King crowned at Axum—Abyssinia invaded by the Galla—Account of that People—The king defeats the Army of Adel—Beats the Falaska, and kills their King—Battle of the Mareb—Baska slain, and Turks expelled from Dobarwa—King is poisoned—Names Za Denghel his Successor.

MENAS was succeeded by his son, Sertza Denghel, who took the name of Melec Segued. He was only twelve years old when he came to the throne, and was crowned at Axum with all the ancient ceremonies. The beginning of his reign was marked by a mutiny of his soldiers, who, joining themselves to some Mahometans, plundered the town, and then disbanded. A misunderstanding also happened with Ayto Hamelmal, son to Romana Werk, daughter of Hatzé Naod, which threatened many misfortunes in its consequences.

Tecla Asfadin, governor of Tigre, was ordered by the king to march against him; and the armies fought with equal advantage. But Hamelmal dying soon after, his party dispersed without further trouble. Fañil, too, his cousin, who had been appointed governor of Damot, rebelled soon after, and was defeated by the king, who this year, (the fourth of his reign) commanded his army for the first time in person, and greatly contributed to the victory, though he was but then sixteen years of age.

The sixth year of his reign he marched against a clan of Galla, called Azé, whom he often beat, staying in the country two whole years. Upon his return, he found the Baharnagash, Ifaac and Harla, and other malcontents, when a sort of a pacification followed; and having received from the rebels considerable presents, he sat down at Dobit, a small town in Dembea, where he passed the winter.

All this time Oviedo and the Portuguese did not appear at court. The king, however, did not molest the priests in their baptisms, preachings, or any of their functions. He often spake favourably of their moral characters, their sobriety, patience, and decency of their lives; but he condemned decisively the whole of their religious tenets, which he pronounced to be full of danger and contradiction, and destructive of civil order and monarchical government. At this period the Galla again made an irruption into Gojam.

It is now time we should speak of this nation, which has contributed more to weakening and reducing the Abyssinian empire, than all their civil wars, and all the foreign enemies put together. When I spoke of the languages of the several nations in Abyssinia, I took occasion merely to mention the origin of these Galla, and their progress northward, till their first hostile appearance in Abyssinia. I shall now proceed to lay before the reader what further I have collected concerning them. Many of them were in the king's service while I was in Abyssinia; and, from a multitude of conversations I had with all kinds of them, I
flatter

flatter myself I have gathered the best accounts regarding these tribes.

The Galla are a very numerous nation of Shepherds, who probably lived under or beyond the Line. What the cause of their emigration was we do not pretend to say with certainty, but they have, for many years, been in an uniform progress northward. They were at first all infantry, and said the country they came from would not permit horses to breed in it, as is the case in 13° north of the Line round Sennaar. Upon coming northward, and conquering the Abyssinian provinces, and the small Mahometan districts bordering on them, they have acquired a breed of horses, which they have multiplied so industriously that they are become a nation of cavalry, and now hold their infantry in very little esteem.

As under the Line, to the south of Abyssinia, the land is exceedingly high, and the sun seldom makes its appearance on account of the continual rains, the Galla are consequently of a brown complexion, with long black hair. Some, indeed, who live in the valleys of the low country, are perfectly black. Although the principal food of this people at first was milk and butter, yet, when they advanced into drier climates, they learned of the Abyssinians to plow and sow the fields, and to make bread. They seem to affect the number seven, and have divided their immense multitude threefold by that number. They all agree, that, when the nation advanced to the Abyssinian frontiers, they were then in the centre of the continent. The ground beginning to rise before them, seven

of their tribes or nations fled off to the east towards the Indian Ocean; and, after making settlements there, and multiplying exceedingly, they marched forward due south into Bali and Dawaro, which they first wasted by constant incursions, then conquered and settled there in the reign of David III. in 1537.

Another division of seven tribes went off to the west about the same time, and spread themselves in another semicircle round the south side of the Nile, and all along its banks round Gojam, and to the east behind the country of the Agows, (which are on the east side of the Nile) to that of the Gongas and Gafats. The high woody banks of this river have hitherto been their barrier to the southward; not but that they have often fought for, and often conquered, and still oftener plundered, the countries on the Abyssinian side of that river; and, from this reign downwards, the scene of action with the Abyssinians has constantly been on the east side of the river. All I mean is, they have never made a settlement on the Abyssinian side of the Nile, except such tribes of them as, from wars among themselves, have gone over to the king of Abyssinia and obtained lands on the banks of that river, opposite to the nation they have revolted from, against which they have ever after been the securest bulwark.

A third division of seven tribes remained in the center, due south of the low country of Shoa; and these are the least known, as having made the fewest incursions. They have indeed, possessed Walaka, a small province between Amhara and Shoa;

Shoa; but this had been permitted politically by the governor of Shoa, as a barrier between him and Abyffinia, on whose fovereign he fcarcely acknowledges any dependence but for form's fake, his province being at prefent an hereditary government defcending from father to fon.

All thefe tribes of Galla gird Abyffinia round at all points from eaft to weft, making inroads, and burning and murdering all that fall into their hands. The privities of the men they cut off, dry, and hang them up in their houfes. They are fo mercilefs as to fpare not even women with child, whom they rip up in hopes of deftroying a male. The weftern part of thefe Galla, which furrounds the peninfula of Gojam and Damot, are called the Boren Galla; and thofe that are to the eaft are named Bertuma Galla, though this laft word is feldom ufed in hiftory, where the Galla to the weftward are called Boren; and the others Galla merely, without any other addition. All thefe tribes, though the moft cruel that ever appeared in any country, are yet governed by the ftricteft difcipline at home, where the fmalleft broil or quarrel among individuals is taken cognizance of, and receives immediate punifhment.

Each of the three divifions of Galla elect a king, that is, there is a king for every feven tribes. There is alfo a kind of nobility among them, from whose families alone the fovereign can be chofen. But there are certain degrees of merit (all warlike) that raife, from time to time, their plebeian families to nobility, and the right of fuffrage. No one of thefe nobles can be elected till paff forty years of

age, unless he has slain with his own hand a number of men which, added to his years, makes up forty.

The council of each of the seven tribes first meets separately in its own district: Here it determines how many are necessary to be left behind for the governing, guarding, and cultivating the territory, while those fixed upon by most votes go as delegates to meet the representatives of the other nations at the domicil, or head-quarters of the king, among the tribe from which the sovereign of the last seven years was taken. Here they sit down under a tree which seems to be sacred, and the god of all the nations. It is called Wanzey*; has a white flower, and great quantity of foliage, and is very common in Abyssinia. After a variety of votes, the number of candidates is reduced to four, and the suffrage of six of these nations go then no farther; but the seventh, whose turn it is to have a king out of their tribe, choose, from among the four, one, whom they crown with a garland of Wanzey, and put a sceptre, or bludgeon, of that wood in his hands, which they call Bucu.

The king of the western Galla is stiled Lubo, the other Mooty. At this assembly, the king allots to each their scene of murder and rapine; but limits them always to speedy returns in case the body of the nation should have occasion for them. The Galla are reputed very good soldiers for surprise, and in the first attack, but have not constancy or perseverance. They accomplish incredible
marches;

* See the article Wanzey in the Appendix.

marches; swim rivers holding by the horses tail, (an exercise to which both they and their horses are perfectly trained;) do the utmost mischief possible in the shortest time; and rarely return by the same way they came. They are excellent light horse for a regular army in an enemy's country.

Iron is very scarce among them, so that their principal arms are poles sharpened at the end, and hardened in the fire, which they use like lances. Their shields are made of bulls hides of a single fold, so that they are very subject to warp in heat, or become too pliable and soft in wet weather. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the report of their cruelty made such an impression upon the Abyssinians, that, on their first engagements they rarely stood firmly the Galla's first onset. Besides this, the shrill and very barbarous noise they are always used to make at the moment they charge, used to terrify the horses and riders, so that a flight generally followed the attack made by Galla horse.

These melancholy and frantic howls I had occasion to hear often in those engagements that happened while I was in Abyssinia. The Edjow, a body of Galla who had been in the late king Joas's service, and were relations to him by his mother, who was of that clan of southern Galla, were constantly in the rebel army, and always in the most disaffected part, who, with the troops of Begemder and Lasta, attacked the king's household, where he was in person; and, though they behaved with a bravery even to rashness, most of them lost their lives, upon the long pikes of the king's black horse, without ever doing any notable execution, as these
horses

horses were too well trained to be at all moved with their shrieks, when they charged, though their bravery and fidelity merited a better fate.

The women are said to be very fruitful. They do not confine themselves even a day after labour, but wash and return to their work immediately. They plow, sow, and reap. The cattle tread out the corn, but the men are the herdsmen, and take charge of the cattle in the fields.

Both sexes are something less than the middle size, exceedingly light and agile. Both, but especially the men, plait their hair with the bowels and guts of oxen, which they wear likewise, like belts, twisted round their middle; and these, as they putrify, occasion a terrible stench. Both copiously anoint their heads and bodies with butter, or melted grease, which is continually raining from them, and which indicates that they came from a country hotter than that which they possess. They greatly resemble the Hottentots in this filthy taste of dress. The rest of their body is naked; a piece of skin only covers them before; and they wear a goat's skin on their shoulders, in shape of a woman's handkerchief, or tippet.

It has been said*, that no religion was ever discovered among them. I imagine that the facts upon which this opinion is founded have never been sufficiently investigated. The Wanzey-tree, under which their kings are crowned, is avowedly worshipped for a god in every tribe. They have certain stones also, for an object of their devotion:

which

* Jerome Lobo Hist. of Abyssinia ap. Le Grande.

which I never could sufficiently understand to give further description of them. But they certainly pay adoration to the moon, especially the new moon, for of this I have frequently been a witness. They likewise worship certain stars in particular positions, and at different times of the year, and are, in my opinion, still in the ancient religion of Sabaism. All of them believe that, after death, they are to live again; that they are to rise with their body, as they were on earth, to enter into another life they know not where, but they are to be in a state of body infinitely more perfect than the present, and are to die no more, nor suffer grief, sickness, or trouble of any kind. They have very obscure, or no ideas at all of future punishment; but their reward is to be a moderate state of enjoyment with the same family and persons with which they lived on earth. And this is very nearly the same belief with the other Pagan nations in Africa with which I have conversed intimately; and this is what writers generally call a belief of the immortality of the soul. Nor did I ever know one savage that had a more distinct idea of it, or ever separated it from the immortality of the body.

The Galla to the south are mostly Mahometans; on the east and west chiefly Pagans. They intermarry with each other, but suffer no strangers to live among them. The Moors, however, by courage, patience; and attention, have found out the means of trading with them in a tolerable degree of safety. The goods they carry are coarse Surat blue cloaths called *maroxy*; also myrrh and salt. This last is the principal and most valuable article.

The Galla sometimes marry the Abyssinian women, but the issue of those marriages are incapable of all employment. Their form of marriage is the following: The bride-groom, standing before the parents of the bride, holds grass in his right hand and the dung of a cow in his left. He then says, "May this never enter, nor this ever come out, if he does not do what he promises;" that is, may the grass never enter the cow's mouth to feed it, or may she die before it is discharged. Matrimonial vows, moreover, are very simple; he swears to his bride that he shall give her meat and drink while living, and bury her when dead.

Polygamy is allowed among them, but the men are commonly content with one wife. Such, indeed, is their moderation in this respect, that it is the women that solicit the men to increase the number of their wives. The love of their children seems to get a speedy ascendancy over passion and pleasure, and is a noble part of the character of these savages that ought not to be forgot. A young woman, having a child or two by her husband, intreats and solicits him that he would take another wife, when she names to him all the beautiful girls of her acquaintance, especially those that she thinks likeliest to have large families. After the husband has made his choice, she goes to the tent of the young woman, and sits behind it in a supplicant posture, till she has excited the attention of the family within. She then, with an audible voice, declares who she is; that she is daughter of such a one; that her husband has all the qualifications for making a woman happy; that she has only two children

children by him; and, as her family is so small, she comes to solicit their daughter for her husband's wife, that their families may be joined together, and be strong; and that her children, from their being few in number, may not fall a prey to their enemies in the day of battle; for the Galla always fight in families, whether against one another, or against other enemies.

When she has thus obtained a wife for her husband, she carries her home, puts her to bed with her husband, where, having left her, she feasts with the bride's relations. There the children of the first marriage are produced, and the men of the bride's family put each their hands upon these children's heads, and afterwards take the oath in the usual manner, to live and die with them as their own offspring. The children, then, after this species of adoption, go to their relations, and visit them for the space of seven days. All that time the husband remains at home in possession of his new bride; at the end of which he gives a feast, when the first wife is seated by her husband, and the young one serves the whole company. The first wife from this day keeps her precedence; and the second is treated by the first wife like a grown up-daughter. I believe it would be very long before the love of their families would introduce this custom among the young women of Britain.

When a father dies and leaves many children, the eldest succeeds to the whole inheritance without division; nor is he obliged, at any time, or by any circumstance, to give his brothers a part afterwards. If the father is alive when the son first begins

gins to shave his head, which is a declaration of manhood, he gives two or three milk-cows, or more, according to his rank and fortune. These, and all their produce, remain the property of the child to whom they were given by his father; and these the brother is obliged to pay to him upon his father's death, in the same number and kinds. The eldest brother, is moreover, obliged to give the sister, whenever she is marriageable, whatever other provision the father may have made in his lifetime for her, with all its increase from the day of the donation.

When the father becomes old and unfit for war, he is obliged to surrender his whole effects to his eldest son, who is bound to give him aliment, and nothing else; and, when the eldest brother dies, leaving younger brothers behind him, and a widow young enough to bear children, the youngest brother of all is obliged to marry her; but the children of the marriage are always accounted as if they were the eldest brother's; nor does this marriage of the youngest brother to the widow entitle him to any part of the deceased's fortune.

The southern Galla are called Elma Kilelloo, Elma Gooderoo, Elma Robali, Elma Doolo, Elma Bodena, Elma Horreta, and Elma Michaeli; these are the seven southern nations which the Mahometan traders pass through in their way to Narea, the southernmost country the Abyssinians ever conquered.

The Western Galla for their principal clans have the Djawi, Edjow or Ayzo, and Toluma, and these were clans we principally fought with when I was

in Abyssinia. They are chiefly Pagans. Some of their children, who were left young in court, when their fathers fled, after the murder of the late king their master, were better Christians and better soldiers than any Abyssinians we had.

It is not a matter of small curiosity to know what is their food, that is so easy of carriage as to enable them to traverse immense deserts, that they may, without warning, fall upon the towns and villages in the cultivated country of Abyssinia. This is nothing but coffee roasted, till it can be pulverised, and then mixed with butter to a consistency that will suffer it to be rolled up in balls, and put in a leather bag. A ball of this composition, between the circumference of a shilling and half-a-crown, about the size of a billiard-ball, keeps them, they say, in strength and spirits during a whole day's fatigue, better than a loaf of bread, or a meal of meat. Its name in Arabia and Abyssinia, is Bun, but I apprehend its true name is Caffé, from Caffa, the south province of Narea, whence it is first said to have come; it is white in the bean. The coffee-trade is the wood of the country, produced spontaneously everywhere in great abundance, from Caffa to the banks of the Nile.

Thus much for this remarkable nation, whose language is perfectly different from any in Abyssinia, and is the same throughout all the tribes, with very little variation of dialect. This is a nation that has conquered some of the finest provinces of Abyssinia, and of whose inroads we shall hereafter have occasion to speak continually; and it is very difficult to say how far they might not have accomplished

plished the conquest of the whole, had not providence interposed in a manner little expected, but more efficacious than a thousand armies, and all the inventions of man.

The Galla, before their inroads into Abyssinia, had never in their own country seen or heard of the small-pox. This disease met them in the Abyssinian villages. It raged among them with such violence, that whole provinces conquered by them became half-desert; and, in many places, they were forced to become tributary to those whom before they kept in continual fear. But this did not happen till the reign of Yafous the Great, at the beginning of the present century, where we shall take fresh notice of it, and now proceed with what remains of the reign of Sertza Denghel, whom we left with his army in the 9th year of his reign, residing at Dobit, a small town in Dembea, watching the motion of the rebels, Isaac Baharnagash, and others, his confederates.

The tenth year of his reign, as soon as the weather permitted him, the king went into Gojam, to oppose the inroads of the Djawi, a clan of the western or Boren Galla, who then were in possession of the Buco, or royal dignity, among the seven nations. But they had repassed the Nile upon the first news of the king's march, without having time to waste the country. The king then went to winter in Bizamo, which is south of the Nile, the native country of these Galla, the Djawi.

If this nation, the Galla, has deserved ill of the Abyssinians by the frequent inroads made into their country, they must, however, confess one obligation,

tion, that in the end they entirely ruined their ancient enemy, the Mahometan king of Adel, and reduced him to a state of perfect insignificance.

Sertza Denghel then returned with his army into Dembea, where, finding the militia of that province much disaffected by communication with the Moorish foldiers settled among them from Gagnè's time to this day, and that most of them had in their hearts forsaken the Christian religion, and were all ready to fail in their allegiance, he assembled the greatest part of them without their arms, and, surrounding them with his foldiers, cut them to pieces, to the number of 3000 men.

In the 13th year of his reign, Mahomet king of Adel marched out of his own country with the view of joining the Bascha and Baharnagash. But the king, ever watchful over the motions of his enemies, surprised the Baharnagash before his junction either with Mahomet or the Bascha, and defeated or dispersed his army, obliging him to fly in disguise, with the utmost danger of being taken prisoner, to hide himself with the bascha at Dobarwa. He then appointed Darguta, governor of Tigre, an old and experienced officer, giving him the charge of the province, and to watch the bascha; and, leaving with him his wounded, (and in their place taking some fresh foldiers from Darguta, he, by forced marches, endeavoured to meet Mahomet, who had not heard of his victory over Isaac; and being informed that the king of Adel was encamped on the hither side of the river Wali, having passed it to join Isaac, the king, by a sudden movement, crossed the river, and came opposite to Mahomet's quarters,

ters, who was then striking his tents, having just heard of the fate of the Baharnagash. Mahomet and his whole army were struck with a panic at this unexpected appearance of the king on the opposite side of the river, which had cut off his retreat to Adel. Fearing, however, there might still be an enemy behind him, and that he should be hemmed in between both, he resolved to pass, but did it in so tumultuous a manner that the king's army had no trouble but to slaughter those who had arrived at the opposite bank. Great part of the cavalry, seeing the fate of their companions at the ford, attempted to pass above and below by swimming: but, though the river was deep and smooth, the banks were high, and many were drowned, not being able to scramble up on the other side. Many were also destroyed by stones, and the lances of Sertza Denghel's men, from the banks above; some passed, however, joining Mahomet, and leaving the rest of the army to attempt a passage at the ford, crossed with the utmost speed lower down the river without being pursued, and carried the news of their own defeat to Adel.

The whole Moorish army perished this day except the horse, either by the sword or in the river; nor had the Moors received so severe a blow since the defeat of Gragne by Claudius. The king then decamped, and took post at Zarroder, on the frontiers of Adel, with a design to winter there and lay waste the country, into which he intended to march as soon as the fair weather returned. But it was the misfortune of this great prince, that his enemies were situated at two most distant extremities
of

of the kingdom. For the Galla attacked Gojam on the west, at the very time he prepared to enter Adel on the east. Without loss of time, however, he traversed the whole kingdom of Abyssinia, and came up with the Boren Galla upon the river Madge, but no action of consequence followed. The Galla, attempting the king's camp in the night, and finding themselves too weak to carry it, retreated immediately into their own country. While returning to Dembea, he met a party of the Falasha, called Abati, at Wainadega, and entirely destroyed them, so that not one escaped.

The king was now so formidable that no army of the enemy dared to face him, and he obliged the Falasha to give up their king Radaet, whom he banished to Wadge; and the four following years he spent in ravaging the country of his enemies the Galla, in Shat and Bed, and that of the Falasha in Samen and Serke, where he beat Caliph king of the Falasha, who had succeeded Radaet.

The Galla, in advancing towards Gojam and Damot, had over-run the whole low country between the mountains of Narea and the Nile. The king, desirous to open a communication with a country where there was a great trade, especially for gold, crossed the Nile in his way to that province, the Galla flying everywhere before him. He was received with very great joy by the prince of that country, who looked upon him as his deliverer from those cruel enemies. Here he received many rich presents; more particularly a large quantity of gold, and he wintered at Cutheny in that province where Abba Hedar his brother died, having been blown up with gun-powder, with his wife and children.

dren. The Nareans desired, this year, to be admitted to the Christian faith; and they were converted and baptised by a mission of priests sent by the king for that purpose.

At the time he was rescuing the kingdom of Narea, Cadward Basha, a young officer of merit and reputation, lately come from Constantinople to Dawaro as basha of Masuah, had begun his command with making inroads into Tigré, and driving off a number of the inhabitants into slavery. The king, necessarily engaged at a distance, suffered these injuries with a degree of impatience; and, after having provided for the security of the several countries immediately near him, he marched with his army directly for Woggora, committing every degree of excess in his march, in order to provoke the Falasha to descend from their heights and offer him battle.

A frugal oeconomical people, such as the Jews are, could not bear to see their cattle and crops destroyed in so wanton a manner before their very faces. They came, therefore, down in immense numbers to attack the king, one of the most excellent generals Abyssinia ever had, at the head of a small, but veteran army. Geshen, brother of the famous Gideon, was then king of the Jews, and commanded the army of his countrymen. The battle was fought on the plain of Woggora on the 19th of January 1594, with the success that was to be expected. Four thousand of the Jewish army were slain upon the spot; and, among them, Geshen, their unfortunate king and leader.

After

After this victory, Sertza Denghel marched his army into Kuara, through the country where the Jews had many strong-holds, and received everywhere their submission. Then turning to the left, he came through the country of the Shangalla, called Woombarea, and so to that of the Agows. There he heard that new troubles were meditating in Damot; but the inhabitants of that province were not yet ripe enough to break out into open rebellion.

That he might not, therefore, have two enemies at such a distance from each other upon his hands at once, this year, as soon as the rains were over, he determined to march and attack the basha. The basha was very soon informed of his designs, and as soon prepared to meet them; so that the king found him already in the field, encamped on his own side of the Mareb, but without having committed, till then, any act of hostility. He marched out of his camp, and formed, upon seeing the royal army approach; leaving a sufficient field for the king to draw up in, if he should incline to cross the river, and attack him.

This confident, rather than prudent conduct of the basha, did not intimidate the king, who being used to improve every advantage coolly, and without bravado, embraced this very opportunity his enemy chose to give him. He formed, therefore, on his own side of the Mareb, and passed it in as good order as possible, considering it is a swift stream, and very deep at that season of the year. He halted several times while his men were in the water, to put them again in order, as if he had ex-

pected to be attacked the moment he landed on the other side. The basha, a man of knowledge in his profession, who saw this cautious conduct of the king, is said to have cried out, "How unlike he is to what I have heard of his father!" alluding to the general rash behaviour of the late king Menas whilst at the head of his army.

Serta Denghel having left all his baggage on the other side, and passed the river, drew up his army in the same deliberate manner in which he had crossed the Mareb, and formed opposite to the basha; as if he had been acting under him, and by his orders, availing himself with great attention of all the advantages the ground could afford him. The basha, confident in the superior valour of his troops, thought, now he had got the king between him and the river, that he would easily that day finish Sertza Denghel's life and reign.

The battle began with the most determined resolution and vigour on both sides. The Abyssinian foot drove back the Turkish infantry; and the king, dismounting from his horse, with his lance and shield in his hand, and charging at their head, animated them to preserve that advantage. On the other hand, the basha, who had soon put to flight part of the Abyssinian horse with whom he had engaged, fell furiously upon the foot commanded by the king, the Turks making a great carnage among them with their sabres, and the affair became but doubtful, when Robel, gentleman of the bed-chamber to the king, who commanded the pikemen on horseback, part of the king's household troops, seeing his master's danger, charged the
Turkish

Turkish horse where he saw the basha in person, and, clearing his way, broke his pike upon an officer of the basha who carried the standard immediately before him, and threw him dead at his feet. Being without other arms, he then drew the short crooked knife which the Abyssinians always carry in their girdle, and, pushing up his horse close before the basha could recover from his surprise, he plunged it in his throat, so that he expired instantly. So unlooked-for a spectacle struck a panic into the troops. The Turkish horse first turned their backs, and a general rout followed.

The basha's body was carried upon a mule out of the field, and struck a terror into all the Mahometans wherever it passed. It no sooner entered Dobarwa than it was obliged to be carried out at the other end of the town. Sertza Denghel was not one that slumbered upon a victory. He entered Dobarwa sword in hand, putting all the Pagans and Mahometans that fell in his way to death, and, in this manner, pursued them to the frontiers of Masuah, leaving many to die for want of water in that desert.

The king, in honour of this brave action performed by Robel, ordered what follows to be writ in letters of gold, and inserted in the records of the kingdom: "Robel, servant to Sertza Denghel, and son to Menetcheli, slew a Turkish basha on horseback with a common knife."

Sertza Denghel, having thus delivered himself from the most formidable of his enemies, marched through Gojam again into Narea, extirpating, all the way he went, the Galla that obstructed his way

to that state. He left an additional number of priests and monks to instruct them in the Christian religion; though there are some historians of this reign who pretend that it was not till this second visit that Narea was converted.

However this may be, victory had every where attended his steps, and he was now preparing to chastise the malcontents at Damot, when he was accosted by a priest, famous for his holiness and talent for divination, who warned him not to undertake that war. But the king, expressing his contempt of both the message and messenger, declared his fixed resolution to invade Damot without delay. The priest is said to have limited his advice still further, and to have only begged him to remember not to eat the fish of a certain river in the territory of Giba in the province of Shat. The king, however, flushed with his victory over the Boren Galla, forgot the name of the river and the injunction; and, having eat fish out of this river, was immediately after taken dangerously ill, and died on his return.

The writer of his life says, that the fatal effects of this river were afterwards experienced in the reign of Yafous the Great, at the time in which he wrote, when the king's whole army, encamped along the sides of this river, were taken with violent sickness after eating the fish caught in it, and that many of the soldiers died. Whether this be really fact or not, I will not take upon me to decide. Whether fish, or any other animal, living in water impregnated with poisonous minerals, can preserve its own life, and yet imbibe a quantity of
poison

poison sufficient to destroy the men that should eat it, seems to me very doubtful. Something like this is said to happen in oysters, which are found on copperas beds, or have preparations of copperas thrown upon them to tinge a part of them with green. I do not, however, think it likely, that the creature would live after this metallic dose, or preserve a taste that would make it food for a man till he accumulated a quantity sufficient to destroy him.

Sertzel Denghel was of a very humane affable disposition, very different from his father Menas. He was stedfast in his adherence to the church of Alexandria, and seemed perfectly indifferent as to the Romish church and clergy. In conversation, he frequently condemned their tenets, but always commended the sobriety and sanctity of their lives. He left no legitimate sons, but many daughters by his wife Mariam Sena; and two natural sons, Za Mariam and Jacob. He had also a nephew called *Za Denghel*, son of his brother Lesana Christos.

It is absolutely contrary to truth, what is said by Tellez and others, that the illegitimate sons have no right to succeed to the crown. There is, indeed, no sort of difference, as may be seen by many examples in the course of this history.

Sertza Denghel at first seemed to have intended his nephew, Za Denghel, to succeed him, a prince who had every good quality; was arrived at an age fit for governing, and had attended him and distinguished himself in great part of his wars. But, being upon his death-bed, he changed his mind, probably at the instigation of the queen and the
ambitious

ambitious nobles, who desired to have the government in their own hands during a long minority. His son Jacob, a boy of seven years old, was now brought into court, and treated as heir-apparent, which every body thought was but natural and pardonable from the affection of a father.

At last when he found that he was sick to death, the interest and love of his country seemed to overcome even the ties of blood; so that, calling his council together around his bed, he designed his successor in this last speech: ‘As I am sensible I am at the point of death, next to the care of my soul, I am anxious for the welfare of my kingdom. My first idea was to appoint Jacob my son to be successor; and I had done so unless for his youth, and it is probable neither you nor I could have cause to repent it. Considering, however, the state of my kingdom, I prefer its interest to the private affection I bear my son; and do, therefore, hereby appoint Za Denghel my nephew to succeed me, and be your king; and recommend him to you as fit for war, ripe in years, exemplary in the practice of every virtue, and as deserving of the crown by his good qualities, as he is by his near relation to the royal family.’ And with these words the king expired in the end of August 1595, and was buried in the island Roma.

As soon as Sertza Denghel died, the nobility resumed their former resolutions. The very reasons the dying king had given them, why Za Denghel was fitted to reign, were those for which they were

were determined to reject him: as they, after so long a reign as the last, were perfectly weary at being kept in their duty, and desired nothing more than an infant king and a long minority: this they found in Jacob.

ZA

Z A D E N G H E L.

From 1595 to 1604.

Za Denghel dethroned—Jacob a Minor succeeds—Za Denghel is restored—Banishes Jacob to Narea—Converted to the Romish Religion—Battle of Barthoa, and Death of the King.

SERTZA DENGHEL had several daughters, one of whom was married to Kefla Wabad, governor of the province of Tigré, and another to Athanasius, governor of Amhara. These two were the most powerful men then in the kingdom. The empress and her two sons-in-law saw plainly, that the succession of Za Denghel, a man of ripe years, possessed of every requisite for reigning, was to exclude them from any share in government but a subaltern one, for which they were to stand candidates upon their own merits, in common with the rest of the nobility.

Accordingly, no sooner was Sertza Denghel dead, perhaps some time before, but a conspiracy was formed to change the order of succession, and this was immediately executed by order of this triumvirate, who sent a body of soldiers and seized Za Denghel, and carried him close prisoner to Dek, a large island in the lake Tzana, belonging to the queen, where he was kept for some time, till he escaped and hid himself in the wild inaccessible mountains of Gojam, which there form the banks of the Nile. They carried their precautions still further; and

and subsequent events after shewed, that these were well-grounded. They sent a party of men at the same time to surprize Socinius, but he, sufficiently upon his guard, no sooner saw the fate of his cousin, Za Denghel, than he withdrew himself, but in such a manner that shewed plainly he knew the value of his own pretensions, and was not to be an unconcerned spectator if a revolution was to happen.

In order to understand perfectly the claims of those princes, who were by turns placed on the throne in the bloody war that followed, it will be necessary to know that the emperor David III. had three sons: The eldest was Claudius; who succeeded him in the empire; the history of whose reign we have already given: The second was Jacob, who died a minor before his brother, but left two sons, Tascar and Facilidas: The third son was Menas, called Adamas Segued, who succeeded Claudius his brother in the empire; whose reign we have likewise given in its proper place.

Menas had four sons; Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, who succeeded his father in the empire, and whose history we have just now finished; the second Aquietèr; the third Abatè; and the fourth, Lefana Christos; whose son was that Za Denghel of whom we were last speaking, appointed to succeed to the throne by his uncle Sertza Denghel, when on his death-bed.

Tascar, the son of Jacob, died a minor; he rebelled against his uncle Menas, in confederacy with the Baharnagash, as we have already seen; and his army being beat by his uncle and sovereign, he

was,

was, by his order, thrown over the steep precipice of Lamalmon, and dashed to pieces. Facilidas, the second remaining son of the same minor Jacob, lived many years, possessed great estates in Gojam, and died afterwards in battle, fighting against the Galla, in defence of these possessions.

This Facilidas had a natural son named Socinios, who inherited his father's possessions; was nephew to Sertza Denghel, and cousin-german to Za Denghel appointed to succeed to the throne; so that Za Denghel being once removed, as Jacob had been postponed, there could be no doubt of Socinios's claim as the nearest heir-male to David III. commonly called Wanag Segued.

Socinios, from his infancy, had been trained to arms, and had undergone a number of hardships in his uncle's wars. Part of his estate had been seized, after his father's death, by men in power, favourites of Sertza Denghel; and he hoped for a complete restitution of them from Za Denghel, his cousin, when he should succeed, for these two were as much connected with each other by friendship and affection, as they were by blood. Nor would any step, says the historian, have ever been taken by Socinios towards mounting the throne, had Za Denghel his cousin succeeded, as by right he ought.

In the mean time, he was at the head of a considerable band of soldiers; had assisted Fasa Christos, governor of Gojam, in defeating the Galla, who had over-run that province; and, by his courage and conduct that day, had left a strong impression upon the minds of the troops that he would soon
become

become the most capable and active foldier of his time.

The queen and her two fons-in-law being difappointed in their attempt upon Socinios, were obliged to take the only ftep that remained in their choice, which was to appoint the infant Jacob * king, a child of feven years old, and put him under the tutelage of Ras Athanafius.

The emprefs Mariam Sena, and her two fons-in-law, had gained to their party Za Selaffe, a perfon of low birth, native of an obfcure nation of Pagans, called Guraguè, a man efteemed for bravery and conduct, and beloved by the foldiers; but turbulent and feditious, without honour, gratitude, or regard, either to his word, to his fovereign, or the interefts of his country.

Jacob had fuffered patiently the direction of thofe that governed him, fo long as the excufe of his minority was a good one. But being now arrived at the age of 17, he began to put in, by degrees, for his fhare in the direction of affairs; and obferving fome fteps that had tended to prolong the government of his tutors, by his own power he banifhed Za Selaffe, the author of them, into the diftant kingdom of Narea.

This vigorous proceeding alarmed the emprefs and her party. They faw that the meafure taken by Jacob would prefently lead all good men and lovers of their country to fupport him, and to annihilate their power. They refolved not to wait
till

* The name of infant-king feems to have been given as a nick-name in Abyffinia, and is preferved to this day.

till this took place, but instantly to restore Za Dengehel, whom, with great difficulty, they found hid in the mountains between Gojam and Damot. And, to remove every suspicion in Za Dengehel's breast, Ras Athanasius repaired to the palace, giving Jacob publicly, even on the throne, the most abusive and scurrilous language, calling him an obstinate, stubborn, foolish boy; declaring him degraded from being king, and announcing to his face the coming of Za Dengehel to supplant him. Jacob's behaviour on so unexpected an occasion was not such as Athanasius's rash speech led to expect. He gave a cool and mild reply to these invectives; but, finding himself entirely in his enemy's power, without losing a moment, he left his palace in the night, taking the road to Samen, not doubting of safety and protection if he could reach his mother's relations among those high, rocky mountains.

Fortune at first seemed to favour his endeavours. He arrived at a small village immediately in the neighbourhood of the country to which he was going; but there he was discovered and made prisoner; carried back and delivered to Za Dengehel his rival, whom he found placed on his throne.

In all these cases, it is the invariable, though barbarous practice of Abyssinia, to mutilate any such pretender to the throne, by cutting off his nose, ear, hand, or foot, as they shall be inclined the patient should die or live after the operation, it being an established law, that no person can succeed to the throne, as to the priesthood, without being perfect in all his limbs. Za Dengehel, as he could

not

not adopt so inhuman a procedure even with a rival, contented himself with only banishing Jacob to Narea.

Ever since that period of Menas's reign, when Samur, basha of Mafuah, had been put in possession of Dobarwa in virtue of a treaty with Isaac Baharnagash, then in rebellion, the Catholic religion was left destitute of all support, the fathers that had remained in Abyssinia being dead, and the entry into that kingdom shut up by the violent animosity of the Turks, and the cruelties they exercised upon all missionaries that fell into their hands. The few Catholics that remained were absolutely deprived of all assistance, when Melchior Sylvanus, an Indian vicar of the church of St. Anne at Goa, was pitched upon as a proper person to be sent to their relief. His language, colour, eastern air and manners, seemed to promise that he would succeed, and baffle the vigilance of the Turks.

He arrived at Mafuah in 1597, and entered Abyssinia unsuspected; but the power of the Turks being much lessened by the great defeat given them by Sertza Denghel, who slew Cadward Basha, and retook Dobarwa and all its dependencies, as has been already mentioned, a very considerable part of their former dangers, the missionaries might now hope to escape. But there still remained others obstructing the communication with India, which, however, were surmountable, and gave way, as most of the kind do, to prudence, courage, and perseverance.

Accordingly,

Accordingly, in the year 1600, Peter Paez, the most capable, as well as most successful missionary that ever entered Ethiopia, arrived at Masuah, after having suffered a long imprisonment, and many other hardships, on his way to that island; and, taking upon him the charge of the Portuguese, relieved Melchior Sylvanus, who returned to India.

Paez, however, did not press on to court as his predecessors, and even his successors constantly did, but, confining himself to the convent of Fremona in Tigre, he first set himself by an invincible application to attain the knowledge of the Geez written language, in which he arrived to a degree of knowledge superior to that of the natives themselves. He then applied to the instruction of youth, keeping a school, where he taught equally the children of the Portuguese, and those of the Abyssinians. The great progress made by the scholars speedily spread abroad the reputation of the master. First of all, John Gabriel, one of the most distinguished officers of the Portuguese, spoke of him in the warmest terms of commendation to Jacob, then upon the throne, who sent to Paez, and ordered his attendance as soon as the rainy season should be over.

In the month of April 1604, Peter, attended only by two of his young disciples, presented himself to the king, who then held his court at Dancaz, where he was received with the same honours as are bestowed upon men of the first rank, to the great discontent of the Abyssinian monks, who easily foresaw that their humiliation would certainly follow this exaltation of Petros; nor were they mistaken. In a dispute held before the king next day,

day, Peter produced the two boys, as more than sufficient to silence all the theologians in Abyssinia. Nor can it ever be doubted, by any who know the ignorance of these brutish priests, but that the victory, in these scholastic disputes, would be fairly, easily, and completely on the side of the children.

Mas was then said according to the usage of the church of Rome, which was followed by a sermon (among the first ever preached in Abyssinia,) but so far surpassing, in elegance and purity of diction, any thing yet extant in the learned language, Geez, that all the hearers began to look upon this as the first miracle on the part of the preacher.

Za Denghel was so taken with it, that, from that instant, he not only resolved to embrace the Catholic religion, but declared this his resolution to several friends, and soon after to Paez himself, under an oath of secrecy that he should conceal it for a time. This oath, prudently exacted from Peter, was as imprudently rendered useless by the zeal of the king himself, who being of too sanguine a disposition to temporize after he was convinced, published a proclamation, forbidding the religious observation of Saturday, or the Jewish sabbath, for ever after. He likewise ordered letters to be wrote to the pope Clement VIII. and to Philip III. king of Spain and Portugal, wherein he offered them his friendship, whilst he requested mechanics to assist, and Jesuits to instruct his people.

These sudden and violent measures were presently known; and every wretch that had, from other causes,

causes, the seeds of rebellion sown in his heart, began now to pretend they were only nourished there by a love and attachment to the true religion.

Many of the courtiers followed the king's example; some as courtiers for the sake of the king's favour, and meaning to adhere to the religion of Rome no longer than it was a fashion at court, promoted their interest, and exposed them to no danger; others, from their firm attachment to the king, the resolution to support him as their rightful sovereign, and a confidence in his superior judgment, and that he best knew what was most for the kingdom's advantage in its present distracted state, and for the confirmation of his own power, so intimately connected with the welfare of his people. Few, very few it is believed, adopted the Catholic faith, from that one discourse only, however pure the language, however eloquent the preacher. A hundred years and more had passed without convincing the Abyssinians in general, or without any material proof that they were prepared to be so.

However, the Jesuits have quoted an instance of this instantaneous conversion by the sermon, which, for their credit I will not omit, though no notice is taken of it in the annals of those times, where it is not indeed to be expected, nor do I mean that it is less credible on this account.

An Abyssinian monk, of very advanced years, came forward to Peter Paez, and said in a loud voice before the king, "Although I have lived to a very great age, without a doubt of the Alexan-
drian

drian faith, I bless God that he has spared me to this day, and thereby given me an opportunity of chooting a better. The things we knew before, you have so well explained, that they become still more intelligible; and we are thereby confirmed in our belief. Those things that were difficult, and which we could hardly understand, you have made so clear, that we now wonder at our own blindness in not having seen them plainly before. For these benefits which I now confess to have received, I here make my declaration, that it is my stedfast purpose, with the assistance of Almighty God, to live and die in the faith you profess, and have now preached."

Among those of the court most attached to the king was Laeca Mariam, the inseparable companion of his good and bad fortune, who had followed his master from principles of duty and affection, without designing to throw away a consideration upon what were likely to be the consequences to himself. He was reputed, in his character and abilities as a soldier, to be equal to Za Selassé, but a very different man, compared to him in his qualities of civil life; for he was sober in his general behaviour, sparing in discourse, and much more ready to do a good office than to promise one; very affable and courteous in his manner, and of so humble and unassuming a deportment, that it was thought impossible to be real in a man, who had so often proved his superiority over others upon trial.

This man, a true royalist, was one of those that embraced the Catholic religion that day, pro-

bably following the example of the king; and this, in the hands of wicked men their enemies, became very soon a pretence for the murder of both; for Za Selaffé, impatient of a rival in any thing, more especially in military knowledge, began to hold seditious assemblies, and especially with the monks, whom he taught to believe what the king's conduct daily confirmed, that the Alexandrian faith was totally reprobated, and no religion would be tolerated but that of the church of Rome.

Gojam, a province always inveterate against any thing that bore the smallest inclination to the church of Rome, declared against the king; and, before he went to join his associates, the traitor, Za Selaffé, in a conference he had with the Abuna Petros, proposed to him to absolve Za Denghel's subjects and foldiers from their oaths of allegiance to their sovereign. The Abuna, a man of very corrupt and bad life, very hearty in the cause, and an enemy to the king, was staggered at this proposal; not that he was averse to it, because it might do mischief, but because he doubted whether any such effect would follow it as Za Selaffé expected; and he, therefore, asked what good he expected from such a novelty? when this traitor assured him, that it would be most efficacious for that very reason, because it was then first introduced: the Abuna forthwith absolved the foldiers and subjects of Za Denghel from their allegiance, declaring the king excommunicated and accursed, together with all those that should support him, or favour his cause.

I must here observe, that, though we are now writing the history of the 17th century, this was the first example of any priest excommunicating his sovereign in Abyssinia, except that of Honorius, who excommunicated Amda Sion for the repeated commission of incest. And the doubt the zealot Abuna Petros had of its effect as being a novelty, which fact the Jesuits themselves attest, shews it was a practice that had not its origin in the church of Alexandria. Neither had these curses of the Abuna any visible effect, till Za Selassé had put himself at the head of an army raised in Gojam. The king was prepared to meet him, and ready to march from Dancaz.

Za Denghel immediately marched out into the plain of Bartcho, and in the way was deserted, first by Ras Athanasius, then by many of his troops; and, by this great desertion in his army, found the first effects of the Abuna's curses, insomuch, that John Gabriel, a Portuguese officer of the first distinction, advised the king to retire in time, and avoid a battle, by flying to strong-holds for a season, till the present delusion among his subjects should cease. But the king, thinking himself dishonoured by avoiding the defiance of a rebel, resolved upon giving Za Selasse battle, who, being an able general, knew well the danger he would incur by delay.

It was October 13th 1704 that the king, after drawing up his army in order of battle, placing 200 Portuguese, with a number of Abyssinian troops, on the right, took to himself the charge of the left, and called for Peter Paez to give him ab-

olution; but that Jesuit was occupied at a convenient distance in Tigre, by his exorcisms destroying ants, butterflies, mice, locusts, and various other enemies, of much more importance, in his opinion, than the life of a king who had been blindly, but directly conducted to slaughter by his fanatical preachings.

The battle began with great appearance of success. On the right the Portuguese, led by old and veteran officers, destroyed and overturned every thing before them with their fire-arms: but on the left, where the king commanded, things went otherwise, for the whole of this division fled, excepting a body of nobility, his own officers and companions, who remained with him, and fought manfully in his defence. Above all, the king himself, trained to a degree of excellence in the use of arms, strong and agile in body, in the flower of his age, and an excellent horseman, performed feats of valour that seemed above the power of man: but he and his attendants being surrounded by the whole army of Za Selaffe, and decreasing in number, were unable to support any longer such disadvantage.

Laeca Mariam, solicitous only for the king's safety, charging furiously every one that approached, was thrust through with a lance by a common soldier who had approached him unobserved. The king, desirous only to avenge his death, threw himself like lightning into the opposite squadron, and received a stroke with a lance in his breast, which threw him from his horse on the ground. Grievous as the wound was, he instantly recovered himself, and, drawing his sword, continued to fight with as
much

much vigour as ever. He was now hemmed in by a ring of soldiers, part of whom, afraid of encountering him, remained at a distance, throwing missile weapons without good direction or strength, as if they had been hunting some fierce wild beast. Others, wishing to take him prisoner, abstained from striking him, out of regard to his character and dignity; but the traitor, Za Selasse, coming up at that instant, and seeing the king almost fainting with fatigue, and covered with wounds, pointed his lance, and spurring his horse, furiously struck him in the middle of the forehead, which blow threw the king senseless to the ground, where he was afterwards slain with many wounds.

The battle ended with the death of Za Denghel; many saw him fall, and more his body after the defeat; but no one chose to be the first that should in any way dispose of it, or care to own that they knew it. It lay in this abject state for three days, till it was buried by three peasants in a corner of the plain, in a little building like a chapel (which I have seen) not above six feet high, under the shade of a very fine tree, in Abyssinia called it *fassa*; there it lay till ten years after, when Socinius removed it from that humble mausoleum, and buried it in a monastery called Daga, in the lake Dembea, with great pomp and magnificence.

The grief which the death of Za Denghel occasioned was so universal, and the odium it brought upon the authors of it so great, that neither Za Saleffe nor Ras Athanasius dared for a time to take one step towards naming a successor, which the fear of Za Denghel, and the uncertainty of victory, had prevented

prevented them from doing by common consent before the battle. There was no doubt but that the election would fall upon Jacob, but he was far off, confined in the mountainous country of Caffa in Narea. The distance was great; the particular place uncertain; the way to it lay through deserts, always dangerous on account of the Galla, and often impassable.

JACOB.

J A C O B.

From 1604 to 1605.

Makes Proposals to Socinios, which are rejected—Takes the Field—Bad Conduct and Defeat of Za Selasse—Battle of Debra Zeit—Jacob defeated and slain.

DURING the interim, Socinios appeared in Amhara, not as one offering himself as a candidate to be supported by the strength and interest of others, but like a conqueror at the head of a small but well-disciplined army of veteran troops, ready to compel by force those who should refuse to swear allegiance to him from conviction of his right.

The first step he took was to send Bela Christos, a nobleman of known worth, to Ras Athanasius then in Gojam, stating to him his pretensions to succeed Za Denghel in the kingdom, desiring his assistance with his army, and declaring that he would acknowledge the service done him as soon as it was in his power. Without waiting for an answer, at the head of his little army he passed the Nile, and entered Gojam. He then sent a second message to Ras Athanasius, acquainting him that he was at hand, and ordering him to prepare to receive him as his sovereign.

This abrupt and confident conduct of Socinios very much disconcerted Ras Athanasius. He had as yet concerted nothing with his friend Za Selasse, and it was now late to do it. There was no person then within the bounds of the empire that solicited the

the crown but Socinios, and he was now at hand, and very much favoured by the soldiers. For these reasons, he thought it best to put a good face upon the matter in his present situation. He, therefore, met Socinios as required, and joined his army, as if it had been his free choice, and saluted him king in the midst of repeated cheerful congratulations of both armies now united.

Having succeeded in this to his wish, Socinios lost no time to try the same experiment with Za Selaſſe, who was then in Dembea, the province of which he was governor. To him he sent this message, "That God by his grace having called him to the throne of his ancestors, he was now on his march to Dembea, where he requested him to prepare his troops to receive him, and dispose them to deserve the favours that he was ready to confer upon all of them." Za Saleſſe remained for a while as if thunder-struck by so peremptory an intimation. Of all masters he most wished for Jacob, because, from experience, he thought he could govern him. Of all masters he most feared Socinios, because he knew he possessed capacity and qualities that would naturally determine him to govern alone. After having concerted with his friends, he sent Socinios answer, "That not having till now known any thing of his claims or intentions, he had sent an invitation to Jacob into Narea, whose answer he expected; but that, in case Jacob did not appear, he then would receive Socinios with every mark of duty and affection, and hoped he would grant him the short delay to which he had inadvertently, though innocently, engaged himself."

This answer did in no shape please Socinius, who dispatched the messenger immediately with this declaration, "That he was already king, and would never cede his right to Jacob, who was deposed and judged unworthy to reign; no nor even to his father Melec Segued, though he should rise again from the grave, and claim the throne he had so long sat upon."

Za Selasse, easily penetrating that there was no peace in Socinius's intentions, first imprisoned the messenger, and, instead of another answer, marched instantly with his whole army to surprize him before he had time to take his measures. And in this he succeeded. For Socinius being at that instant overtaken by sickness, and not knowing what trust to put in Athanasius's army, retired in haste to the mountains of Amhara; while Athanasius also withdrew his troops till he should know upon what terms he stood both with Za Selasse and the king.

Still no return came from Jacob. The winter was nearly past, and not only the soldiers, but people of all ranks began to be weary of this interregnum, and heartily wished for their ancient form of government. They said, That since Jacob did not appear, there could be no reason for excluding Socinius, whose title was undoubted, and who had all the qualities necessary to make a good king.

Za Selasse seeing this opinion gained ground among his troops, and fearing they might mutiny and leave him alone, made a virtue of necessity: he dispatched an ambassador to acknowledge Socinius as his sovereign, and declare that he was ready to swear allegiance to him. Socinius received

received this embassy with great apparent complacency. He sent in return a monk, in whom he confided, a person of great worth and dignity, to be his representative, and receive the homage of Za Selasse and his army. On the news of this monk's approach, Za Selasse sent on his part ten men, the most respectable in his camp, to meet this representative of the king, and conduct him into the camp, where Za Saleffe, and all his troops, did homage, and swore allegiance to Socinios. Feasts and presents were now given in the camp, as is usual at the accession of a new king to the throne, and all the army abandoned themselves to joy.

These good tidings were immediately communicated both to Socinios and Ras Athanasius. But, in the midst of this rejoicing, a messenger came from Jacob, informing Za Selasse that he was then in Dembea; that he had conferred upon him the title of Ras and Betwudet, that is, had made him the king's lieutenant-general throughout the whole empire. Za Selasse, in possession of the height of his wishes, and making an ample distribution among his troops, determined immediately to march and join Jacob in Dembea; but first he wrote privately to the ten men that had accompanied the monk to Socinios, that they should withdraw themselves as suddenly and privately as possible before the coming of Jacob was known. Eight of these were lucky enough to do so; two of them were overtaken in the flight and brought back to Socinios, who ordered them to immediate execution.

Ras Athanasius, seeing the prosperous turn that Jacob's affairs had taken, renounced his oath to Socinios,

Socinius, and repaired to Jacob at Coga, while Socinius retired into Amhara at the head of a very respectable army, waiting an opportunity to repay Jacob for his ambition, and Athanasius and Za Selasse for their treason and perjury towards him.

Although Jacob was now again seated on the throne, surrounded by the army and great officers of the empire, his mind was always disturbed with the apprehension of Socinius. In order to free himself from this anxiety, he employed Socinius's mother in an application to her son, with an offer of peace and friendship; promising, besides, that he would give him in property the kingdoms of Amhara, Wallaka, and Shoa, and all the lands which his father had ever possessed in any other part of Abyffinia. Socinius shortly answered; "That what God had given him, no man could take from him; that the whole kingdom belonged to him, nor would he ever relinquish any part of it but with his life. He advised Jacob to consider this, and peaceably resign a crown which did not belong to him; and the attempting to keep which, would involve him and his country in a speedy destruction."

Upon this defiance, seeing Socinius implacable, Jacob took the field, and was followed by Za Selasse. But this proud and insolent traitor, who never could confine himself within the line of his duty, even under a king of his own choosing, would not join his forces with Jacob, but vain-gloriously led a separate army, subject to his orders alone. In this manner, having separate camps, choosing different ground, and sometimes at a considerable

considerable distance from each other, they came up with Socinius in Begemder. Jacob advanced so near him that his tent could be distinctly seen from that of Socinius, and, on the morrow, Jacob and Za Selasse, drawing up their armies, offered Socinius battle.

That wise prince saw too well that he was over-matched; and, though he desired a battle as much as Jacob, it was not upon such terms as the present. He declined it, and kept hovering about them as near as possible on the heights and uneven ground, where he could not be forced to fight till it perfectly suited his own interest.

This refusal on the part of Socinius did but increase Za Selasse's pride. He despised Jacob as a general, and thought that Socinius declining battle was owing only to the apprehension he had of his presence, courage, and abilities. He continued parading with the separate army, perfectly intoxicated with confidence and an imaginary superiority, neglecting all the wholesome rules of war rigidly adhered to by great generals for the sake of discipline, however distant they may be from their enemy.

It was not long before this was told Socinius, who soon saw his advantage in it, and thereupon resolved to fight Za Selasse singly, and watch attentively till he should find him as far as possible from Jacob. Nor did he long wait for the occasion; for Za Selasse, attempting to lead his army through very uneven and stony ground, called *the Pass of Mount Defer*, and at a considerable distance from Jacob, Socinius, attacked him while in the
pass

pass so rudely, that his army, entangled in broken and unknown ground, was surrounded and almost cut to pieces. Za Selaffe, with a few followers, saved themselves by the goodness of their horses, and joined the king, being the first messengers of their own defeat.

Jacob received the news of this misfortune without any apparent concern. On the contrary, he took Za Selaffe roundly to task for having lost such an army by his misconduct; and from that time put on a coolness of carriage towards him that could not be brooked by such a character. He made direct proposals to Socinios to join him, if he could be assured that his services would be well received. Socinios, though he reposed no confidence in one that had changed sides so often, was yet, for his own sake, desirous to deprive his rival of an officer of such credit and reputation with the soldiers. He therefore promised him a favourable reception; and, a treaty being concluded, Socinios marched into Gojam, followed by Jacob, and there was joined by Za Selaffe whom Jacob had made governor of that province.

Jacob, not knowing how far this desertion might extend, and to shew Socinios the little value he set upon his new acquisition, immediately advanced towards him, and offered him battle. This was what Socinios very earnestly wished for; but, as his army was much inferior to Jacob's he seemed to decline it from motives of fear, till he had found ground proper for his army to engage in with advantage.

Jacob, sensible of the great superiority he had, (historians say it was nearly thirty to one) grew every

every day more impatient to bring Socinios to an engagement, fearing he might retreat, and thereby prolong the war, which he had no doubt would be finished by the first action. Therefore he was anxious to keep him always in fight, without regarding the ground through which his eagerness led him. Several days the two armies marched side by side in sight of each other, till they came to Debra Tzait, or the Mountain of Olives. There Jacob halted; he then advanced a little further, and seeing Socinios encamped, he did the same in a low and very disadvantageous post on the banks of the river Lebart.

Socinios having now obtained his desire, early in the morning of the 10th of March 1607 fell suddenly upon Jacob cooped up in a low and narrow place, which gave him no opportunity of availing himself of his numbers. Jacob soon found that he was over-reached by the superior generalship of his enemy. Socinios's troops were so strongly posted, that Jacob's soldiers found themselves in a number of ambushes they had not foreseen, so that fighting or flying being equally dangerous to them his whole army was nearly destroyed in the field, or in the flight, which was most ardently and vigorously followed till night, with little loss on the part of Socinios.

This battle, decisive enough by the rout and dispersion of the enemy, became still more so from two circumstances attending it: The first was the death of his competitor, who fell unknown among a herd of common soldiers in the beginning of the action, without having performed, in his own person, any
thing

thing worthy of the character he had to sustain, or that could enable any spectator to give an account in what place he fell; the consequence of which was, that he was thought to be alive many years afterwards. The second was the death of the Abuna Petros. This priest had distinguished himself in Za Denghel's reign, by absolving the king's subjects and soldiers from their oaths of allegiance, which was followed by the unfortunate death of Za Denghel in the plain of Bartcho. Vain of the importance he had acquired by the success of his treason, he had pursued the same conduct with regard to Socinios, and followed Jacob to battle, where, trusting to his character and habit for the safety of his person, he neglected the danger that he ran amidst a flying army. While occupied in uttering vain curses and excommunications against the conquerors, he was known, by the crucifix he held in his hand, by a Moorish soldier of Socinios, who thrust him through with a lance, then cut his head off, and carried it to the king.

The Abyssinian annals state, that, immediately after seeing the head of Abuna Peter, Socinios ordered a retreat to be sounded, and that no more of his enemies should be slain. On the contrary, the Jesuits have said, that the pursuit was continued even after night; for that a body of horse, among whom were many Portuguese belonging to the army of Jacob, flying from Socinios's troops, fell over a very high precipice, it being so dark that they did not discover it; and that one soldier, called Manuel Gonzalez, finding his horse leave him, as it were flying, lighted luckily on a tree, where,

where, in the utmost trepidation, he sat all night, not knowing where he was. This fear was greatly encreased in the morning, when he beheld the horses, and the men who were his companions, lying dead and dashed to pieces in the plain below.

Ras Athanasius, who had followed the party of Jacob, narrowly escaped by the swiftness of his horse, and hid himself in the monastery of Dima, at no great distance from the field of battle; and Peter Paez, from remembrance of his former good offices, having recommended him to Sela Christos, Socinios's brother-in-law, he was pardoned; but losing favour every day, his effects and lands having been taken from him on different occasions, he is said at last to have died for want, justly despised by all men for unsteadiness in allégiance to his sovereigns, by which he had been the occasion of the death of two excellent princes, had frequently endangered the life and state of the third, and had been the means of the slaughter of many thousands of their subjects, worthier men than himself, as they fell in the discharge of their duty. But before his death he had still this further mortification, that his wife, daughter of Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, voluntarily forsook his bed and retired to a single life.

SOCINIOS,

SOCINIOS, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1605 to 1632.

Socinius embraces the Romish Religion—War with Senaar—With the Shepherds—Violent Conduct of the Romish Patriarch—Lasta rebels—Defeated at Wainadega—Socinius restores the Alexandrian Religion—Resigns his Crown to his eldest Son.

SOCINIOS, now universally acknowledged as king, began his reign with a degree of moderation which there was no reason to expect of him. Often as he had been betrayed, many and inveterate as his enemies were, now he had them in his power, he sought no vengeance for injuries which he had suffered, but freely pardoned every one, receiving all men graciously without reproach or reflections, or even depriving them of their employments.

Being informed, however, that one Mahardin, a Moor, had been the first to break through that respect due to a king, by wounding Za Denghel at the battle of Bartcho, he ordered him to be brought at noon-day before the gate of his palace, and his head to be there struck off with an ax, as a just atonement for violated majesty.

The king, now retired to Coga, gave his whole attention to regulate those abuses, and repair those losses, which this long and bloody war had occasioned. He had two brothers by the mother's side, men of great merit, Sela Christos, and Emana Christos, destined to share the principal part in the king's confidence and councils.

Bela Christos, a man of great family, who had been attached to him since he formed his first pretensions to the crown, was called to court to take his share in the glory and dangers of this reign, which it was easy to see would be a very active one; for every province around was full of rebels and independents, who had shaken off the yoke of government, paid no taxes, nor shewed other respect to the king than just what at the moment consisted with their own interest or inclination.

The Portuguese soldiers, remnants of the army which came into Abyssinia under Christopher de Gama, had multiplied exceedingly, and their children had been trained by their parents in the use of fire-arms. They were at this time incorporated in one body under John Gabriel a veteran officer, who seems to have constantly remained with the king, while his soldiers (at least great part of them) had followed the fortune they thought most likely to prevail ever since the time of Claudius.

Menas did not esteem them enough to keep them in his army at the expence of enduring the seditious conversations of their priests reviling and undervaluing his religion and government. He therefore banished them the kingdom; but, instead of obeying, they joined the Baharnagash, then confederated with the Turks and in rebellion against his sovereign, as we have already mentioned. Sertza Denghel seems to have scarcely set any value upon them after this, and made very little use of them during his long reign. Upon the infant Jacob's being put upon the throne they all adhered to him; and, after Jacob's banishment, part of them had
attached

attached themselves to Za Denghel, and behaved with great spirit in the battle of Bartcho.

Upon Jacob's restoration they had joined him, and with him were defeated at the decisive battle of Lebart, being all united against Socinios; so that, on whatever side they declared themselves, they were constantly beaten by the cowardice of the Abyssinians with whom they were joined. Yet, tho' they had been so often on the side that was unfortunate, their particular loss had been always inconsiderable; because, whatever was the fate of the rest of the army, none of the country troops would ever stand before them, and they made their retreat from amidst a routed army nearly in the same safety as if they had been conquerors; because it was not, for several reasons, the interest of the conquerors to attack them, nor was the experiment ever likely to be an eligible one to the assailants.

Socinios followed a conduct opposite to that of Menas. He determined to attach the Portuguese wholly to himself, and to make them depend upon him entirely. For this reason he made great advances to their priests, and sent for Peter Paez to court, where, after the usual disputes upon the pope's supremacy, and the two natures in Christ, mass was said, and a sermon preached, with much the same success as it had been in the time of Za Denghel, and with full as great offence to the Abyssinian clergy.

The province of Dembea, lying round the lake Tzana, is the most fertile and the most cultivated country in Abyssinia. It is entirely flat, and seems

to have been produced by the decrease of water in the lake, which, from very visible marks, appears to have formerly been of four times the extent of what it is at present. Dembea, however fruitful, has one inconvenience to which all level countries in this climate are subject: a mortal fever rages in the whole extent of it, from March to Heder Michael, the eighth day of November, when there are always gentle showers. This dangerous fever stops immediately upon the falling of these rains, as suddenly as the plague does upon the first falling of the nuċta, or dew, in Egypt.

On the south side of this lake the country rises into a rocky promontory, which forms a peninsula and runs far into the lake. Nothing can be more beautiful than this small territory, elevated, but not to an inconvenient height, above the water which surrounds it on all sides, except the south. The climate is delightful, and no fevers or other diseases rage here. The prospect of the lake and distant mountains is magnificent beyond European conception, and Nature seems to have pointed this place out for pleasure, health, and retirement. Paez had asked and obtained this territory from the king, who, he says, gave him a grant of it in perpetuity. The manner of this he describes: "A civil officer is sent on the part of the king, who calls together all the proprietors of the neighbouring lands, and visits the bounds with them; they kill a goat at particular distances, and bury the heads under ground upon the boundary line of this regality; which heads, Paez says, it is felony to dig

dig up or remove; and this is a mark or gift of land in perpetuity."

Without contradicting the form of burying the goats heads, I shall only say, I never saw or heard of it, nor is there such a thing as a gift of land in *perpetuum* known in Abyssinia. All the land is the king's; he gives it to whom he pleases during pleasure, and resumes it when it is his will. As soon as he dies the whole land in the kingdom (that of the Abuna excepted) is in the disposal of the crown; and not only so, but, by the death of every present owner, his possessions, however long enjoyed, revert to the king, and do not fall to the eldest son. It is by proclamation the possession and property is reconveyed to the heir, who thereby becomes absolute master of the land for his own life or pleasure of the king, under obligation of military and other services; and that exception, on the part of the Abuna, is not in respect to the sanctity of his person, or charge, but because it is founded upon treaty *, and is become part of the constitution.

The Abyssinians saw, with the utmost astonishment, the erection of a convent strongly built with stone and lime, of which before they had no knowledge, and their wonder was still increased, when, at desire of the king, Paez undertook, of the same materials, to build a palace for him at the southmost end of this peninsula, which is called Gorigora. It was with amazement mixed with terror that

* We have mentioned this treaty in the reign of Icon Amlac.

that they saw a house rise upon house, for so they call the different stories.

Paez here displayed his whole ingenuity, and the extent of his abilities. He alone was architect, mason, smith, and carpenter, and with equal dexterity managed all the instruments used by each profession in the several stages of the work. The palace was what we shall call wainscoted with cedar, divided into state-rooms, and private apartments likewise for the queen and nobility of both sexes that formed the court, with accommodations and lodgings for guards and servants.

As the king had at that time a view to attack the rebels, the Agows and Damots, and to check the inroads of the Galla into Gojam, he saw with pleasure a work going on that provided the most commodious residence where his occupation in all probability was chiefly to lie. His principal aim was to bring into his kingdom a number of Portuguese troops, which, joined to those already there, and the converts he proposed to make after embracing the Catholic religion, might enable him to extirpate that rebellious spirit which seemed now universally to have taken possession of the hearts of his subjects, and especially of the clergy, of late taught, he did not seem to know how, that most dangerous privilege of cursing and excommunicating kings. He had not seen in Peter Paez and his fellow-priests any thing but submission, and a love of monarchy; their lives and manners were truly apostolical; and he never thought, till he came afterwards to be convinced upon proof, that the patriarch from Rome, and the Abuna from Cairo,

tho'

tho' they differed in their opinion as to the two natures in Christ, did both heartily agree in the desire of erecting ecclesiastical dominion and tyranny upon the ruins of monarchy and civil power, and of effecting a total subordination of the civil government, either to the chairs of St. Mark or St. Peter.

In the winter, during the cessation from work, Socinius called Paez from Gorgora to Coga, where he enlarged the territory the Jesuits then had at Fremona. After which he declared to him his resolution to embrace the Catholic religion; and, as Paez says, presented him with two letters, one to the king of Portugal, the other to the pope: the first dated the 10th of December 1607, the latter the 14th of October of the same year. These letters say not a word of his intended conversion, nor of submission to the see of Rome; but complain only of the disorderly state of his kingdom, and the constant inroads of the Galla, earnestly requesting a number of Portuguese soldiers to free them from their yoke, as formerly, under the conduct of Christopher de Gama, they had delivered Abyssinia from that of the Moors.

While these things passed at Coga, two pieces of intelligence were brought to the king, both very material in themselves, but which affected him very differently. The first was, that the traitor Za Selassé, while making one of his incursions into Gogjam, had fallen into an ambush laid for him by the Toluma Galla, guardians of that province on the banks of the Nile, and that these Pagans had slain him and cut off his head, which they then presented to
the

the king, who ordered it to be exposed on the lance whereon it was fixed, in the most conspicuous place in the front of his palace.

This was the end of Ras Za Selaffé, a name held in detestation to this day throughout all Abyffinia. Though his death was just such as it ought to have been, yet, as it was in an advanced time of life, he still became a hurtful example, by shewing that it was possible for a man to live to old age in the continual practice of murder and treason.

He was of low birth, as I have already observed, of a Pagan nation of Troglodytes, of the lowest esteem in Abyffinia, employed always in the meanest and most servile occupations, in which capacity he served first in a private family. Being observed to have an active, quick turn of mind, he was preferred to the service of Melec Segued, upon whose death he was so much esteemed by his son Jacob, for the expertness and capacity he shewed in business, that he gave him large possessions, and appointed him afterwards to several ranks in the army; having regularly advanced through the subordinate degrees of military command, always with great success, he was made at last general; and being now of importance sufficient to be able to ruin his benefactor, he joined Ras Athanasius, who had rebelled against Jacob, by whom he was taken prisoner, and, being mercifully dealt with, only banished to Narea. From this disgraceful situation he was freed by Za Denghel, who conferred upon him the most lucrative important employment in the state. In return, he rebelled against Za Denghel; and at Barcho deprived him of his
kingdom

kingdom and life. Upon Jacob's accession he was appointed Betwudet, the first place in Ethiopia, after the king, and governor of Gojam, one of the largest and richest provinces in Abyssinia. But he soon after again forsook Jacob, swore allegiance to Socinios, and joined him.

Not content with all this, he began to form some new designs while with the court at Coga; and, having said to some of the king's servants over wine, that it was prophesied to him he should kill three kings, which he had verified in two, and was waiting for the third, this speech was repeated to Socinios, who ordered Za Selassé to be apprehended; and, though he most justly deserved death, the king mercifully commuted his punishment to banishment to the top of Oureé Amba, which signifies the Great Mountain upon the high ridge, called *Gufman*, near the banks of the Nile; and, though close confined in the caves on the top of that mountain, after a year's imprisonment he escaped to Walaka, and there declared himself captain of a band of robbers, with which he infested the province of Gojam, when he was slain by a peasant, and his head cut off and sent to Socinios, who very much rejoiced in the present, and disposed of it as we have mentioned.

The second piece of intelligence the emperor received was that in the mountains of Habab, contiguous to Masuah, where is the famous monastery of the monks of St. Eustathius, called *Eifan*; a person appeared calling himself Jacob, son of Sertza Denghel, and pretending to have escaped from the battle of Lebart; thus, taking advantage of the circumstance

cumstance of Jacob's body not having been found in the field among the dead after that engagement, he pretended he had been so grievously wounded in the teeth and face that it was not possible to suffer the deformity to appear; for which reason, as he said, but, as it appeared afterwards, to conceal the little resemblance he bore to Jacob, he wrapped about his head the corner of his upper cloth, and so concealed one side of his face entirely.

All Tigré hastened to join this impostor as their true sovereign; who, finding himself now at the head of an army, came down from the mountains of Bisan, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Dobarwa upon the Mareb, where he had a new accession of strength.

The shape of the crown in Abyffinia is that of the hood, or capa, which the priests wear when saying mass. It is composed of silver, sometimes of gold, sometimes of both metals, mixed and lined with blue silk. It is made to cover part of the forehead, both cheeks, and the hinder part of the neck likewise to the joining of the shoulders. A crown of this shape could not but be of great service in hiding the terrible scars with which the impostor's face was supposed to be deformed. He had accordingly got one made at Masuah, beat very thin out of a few ounces of gold which he had taken from a caravan that he had robbed. He wore it constantly upon his head as a token that he was not a candidate for the crown, but real sovereign, who had worn that mark of power from his infancy.

The news of this impostor, with the usual exaggeration of followers, soon came to Sela Christos, governor of Tigre, who, seeing that the affair became more serious every day, resolved to attempt to check it. He conceived, however, he had little trust to put in the troops of his province, who all of them were wavering whether they should not join the rebel. His sole dependence, then, was upon the troops of his own household, veteran soldiers, well paid and clothed, and firmly attached to his person, and likewise upon the Portuguese. Above all, being himself a man of consummate courage and prudence, he was far from judging of the power of his enemy by the multitude of rabble which composed it.

As soon as the armies came in presence of each other, Jacob offered the governor battle. But no sooner did the impostor's troops see the eagerness with which the small but chosen band rushed upon them, than they fled and dispersed; and though Sela Christos had taken every precaution to cut off the pretended Jacob from his usual sculking places, it was not possible to overtake or apprehend him; for he arrived in safety in one of the highest and most inaccessible mountains of the district, whence he looked down on Sela Christos and his army without apprehension, having behind him a retreat to the more distant and less known mountains of Hamazen, should his enemies press him further.

As long as Sela Christos remained with his little army in that country, the impostor Jacob continued on the highest part of the mountains, accompanied only by two or three of his most intimate friends,

friends, who being people whose families dwelt in the plain below, brought him constant intelligence of what passed there.

Sela Christos, wishing by all means to engage the enemy, marched into a considerable plain called *Mai-aquel*; but seeing on every side the top of each mountain guarded by troops of soldiers, he was afraid he had advanced too far; and, apprehensive lest he should be inclosed in the midst of a multitude so posted, he began to think how he could best make his retreat before he was surrounded by so numerous enemies. But they no sooner saw his intentions by the movement of his army, than, leaving their leader as a spectator above, they fell on all sides upon Sela Christos's troops, who, having no longer any safety but in their arms, began to attack the hill that was next them, which they stormed as they would do a castle. Finding the small resistance that each of these posts made, the governor divided his small army into so many separate bodies, leaving his cavalry in the plain below, who, without fighting, were only employed in slaughtering those his troops had dislodged from their separate posts.

The day after, the impostor assembling his scattered troops, retreated towards the sea into the territory of Hamazen, between the country of the Baharnagash and the mountains of the Habab.

Sela Christos, finding that, while he pursued his victory in these distant parts, the spirit of rebellion increased nearer home, resolved to inform the king his brother of the unpromising state of his affairs in Tigre, and the great necessity there was of his presence

ſence there. Nor did Socinius loſe a moment after receiving this intelligence from Sela Chriſtos, although it had found him, in one reſpect, very ill prepared for ſuch an undertaking; for he had ſent all his horſe from Coga upon an expedition againſt the Shangalla and Gongas, nations on the north-weſt border of this kingdom; ſo that, when he marched from Wainadega, his cavalry amounted to 530 men only, beſides a ſmall reinforcement brought by Emana Chriſtos, governor of Amhara.

It was at Aibo the king turned off the road to Tigre towards Begemder, and that day encamped at Wainadega. From Wainadega he advanced to Davada; and, croſſing the Reb, he turned off by the way of Zang, and encamped at Kattame. He then proceeded to Tzame, and arrived at Hader. At this place ſome ſpies informed him that an advanced party of the Galla Marawa were ſtrongly lodged in a hill not far off. Upon receiving this notice, Socinius ordered his army to reſreſh themſelves, to extinguiſh all lights, and march with as little noiſe as poſſible.

While it was ſcarce dawn of day, a ſtrong detachment of the king's army ſurrounded the hill where the Galla were, and found there a ſmall number of theſe ſavages placed like piquets to give the alarm and prevent ſurpriſe. Eleven Galla were ſlain, and their heads cut off and carried to the king, the firſt fruits of his expedition.

Reſolving to profit by this early advantage, Socinius followed with all diligence, and came in ſight of the army of the enemy, without their having taken the ſmalleſt alarm. They were lying cloſely

closely and securely in their huts that they had made. A large ravine full of trees and stumps divided the two armies, and in part concealed them from each other. The king ordered Emana Christos, and Abeton Welleta Christos, to pass the ravine with the horse, and fall upon the Galla suddenly, throwing the heads of those of the advanced guard they had cut off on the ground towards them.

Before the king's horse had passed the ravine, the Galla were alarmed, and mounted on horseback. As they never fight in order, it required no time to form; but they received the king's cavalry so rudely, that, though Emana Christos and the young prince behaved with the utmost courage, they were beat back, and obliged to fly with considerable loss, being entangled in the bushes. No sooner did the king observe that his horse were engaged, than he ordered his troops to pass the ravine to support them, and was desirous to bring on a general engagement. But a panic had seized his troops. They would not stir, but seemed benumbed and overcome by the cold of the morning, spectators of the ruin of the cavalry.

Emana Christos, and those of the cavalry that had escaped the massacre, had repassed the ravine, and dispersed themselves in the front of the foot; while the victorious Marawa, like ignorant savages, pushed their victory to the very front of the king's line. Socinios, ordering all the drums of the army to beat and trumpets to sound, to excite some spirit in his troops, advanced himself before any of his soldiers, and slew the first Galla within his reach with his own hands. The example and danger the king exposed himself to, raised the indignation of the troops.

troops. They poured in crowds, without regarding order, upon the Marawa, great part of whom had already passed the ravine, and all that had passed it were cut to pieces.

The Galla, unable to stand this loss, fled from the field, and immediately after left Begemder. The want of horse on the king's part saved their whole army from the destruction which would infallibly have been the consequence of a vigorous pursuit, through a country where every inhabitant was an enemy. The king after this returned to his palace at Coga to finish the business he had in hand.

In the mean time, a report was spread through all Tigre, that the king had been defeated by the Galla, and that Ras Sela Christos had repaired to Gondar in consequence of that disaster. The impostor Jacob lost no time in taking advantage of this report. He descended from his natural fortrefs, and, in conjunction with the governor of Axum, slew several people, and committed many ravages in Sire. The Ras no sooner learned that he was encamped on plain ground, than he presented himself with the little army he had before; and, though the odds against him were excessive, yet by his presence and conduct, the rebels, though they fought this time with more than ordinary obstinacy, were defeated with great loss, and their leader, the supposed Jacob, forced again to his inaccessible mountains.

Socinius having now finished the affairs which detained him at Coga, and being informed that the southern Galla, resenting the defeat of the Marawa, had entered into a league to invade Abyssinia with united

united forces, and a complete army to burn and lay waste the whole country between the Tacazze and Tzana, and to attack the emperour in his capital of Coga, which they were determined to destroy, sent orders to Kafmati Julius, his son-in-law, to join him immediately with what forces he had; as also to Kefla Christos; and, being joined by both these officers and their troops, he marched and took post at Ebenaat in the district of Belessen, in the way by which the Galla intended to pass to the capital, and he resolved to await them there.

The Galla advanced in their usual manner, burning and destroying churches and villages, and murdering without mercy all that were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands. The king bore these excesses of his enemy with the patience of a good general, who saw they contributed to his advantage. He therefore did not offer to check any of their disorders, but by not resisting rather hoped to encourage them. He had an army in number superior, and this was seldom the case; but in quality there was no comparison, five of the king's troops being equal to twenty of the enemy, and this was the general proportion in which they fought. He, therefore, contented himself with choosing proper ground to engage, and improving it by ambushes such as the nature of the field permitted or suggested.

It was the 7th of January 1608, early in the morning, that the Galla presented themselves to Socinios in battle, in a plain below Ebenaat, surrounded with small hills covered with wood. The Galla filled the whole plain, as if voluntarily devoting

voting themselves to destruction, and from the hills and bushes were destroyed by fire-arms from enemies they did not see, who with a strong body took possession of the place through which they entered, and by which they were to return no more.

Socinius that day, for what particular reason does not appear, distinguished himself among the midst of the Galla, by fighting like a common soldier. It is thought by the historians of those times, that he had received advice while at Coga, that his son-in-law Julius intended to rebel, and therefore he meant to discourage him by comparison of their personal abilities. This, however, is not probable; the king's character was established, and nothing more could be added to it. However that may be, all turned to the disadvantage of the Galla. No general or other officer thought himself entitled to spare his person more than the king; all fought like common soldiers; and, being the men best armed and mounted, and most experienced in the field, they contributed in proportion to the slaughter of the day. About 12,000 men on the part of the Galla were killed upon the spot; the very few that remained were destroyed by the peasants, whilst 400 men only fell on the part of the king, so it was a massacre rather than a battle.

Socinius now resolved to try his fortune against the impostor Jacob, and with that resolution he crossed Lamalmon, descending to the Tacazze in his way to Sire. Here, as on the frontiers of his province, he was met by Sela Christos, who brought Peter Paez along with them. Both were kindly received by the king, who encamped in the large plain before Axum, in consequence of a reso-

tion he had long taken of being crowned with all the ancient ceremonies used on this occasion by former kings, while the royal residence was in the province of Tigre.

It was on the 18th of March, according to their account, the day of our Saviour's first coming to Jerusalem, that this festival began. His army consisted of about 30,000 men. All the great officers, all the officers of state, and the court then present, were every man dressed in the richest and gayest manner. Nor was the other sex behindhand in the splendour of their appearance. The king, dressed in crimson damask, with a great chain of gold round his neck, his head bare, mounted upon a horse richly caparisoned, advanced at the head of his nobility, passed the outer court, and came to the paved way before the church. Here he was met by a number of young girls, daughters of the umbares, or supreme judges, together with many noble virgins standing on the right and left of the court.

Two of the noblest of these held in their hands a crimson cord of silk, somewhat thicker than common whip-cord, but of a looser texture, stretched across from one company to another, as if to shut up the road by which the king was approaching the church. When this cord was prepared and drawn tight about breast-high by the girls, the king entered, advancing at a moderate pace, curvetting and shewing the management of his horse. He was stopped by the tension of this string, while the damsels on each side asking who he was, were answered, "I am your king, the king of Ethiopia."

To

To which they replied with one voice, "You shall not pass; you are not our king."

The king then retires some paces, and then presents himself as to pass, and the cord is again drawn across his way by the young women so as to prevent him, and the question repeated, "Who are you?" The king answered, "I am your king, the king of Israel." But the damsels resolved, even on this second attack, not to surrender but upon their own terms; they again answer, "You shall not pass; you are not our king."

The third time, after retiring, the king advances with a pace and air more determined; and the cruel virgins again presenting the cord and asking who he is, he answers, "I am your king, the king of Sion;" and, drawing his sword, cuts the silk cord asunder. Immediately upon this the young women cry, "It is a truth, you are our king; truly you are the king of Sion." Upon which they begin to sing Hallelujah, and in this they are joined by the court and army upon the plain; fire-arms are discharged, drums and trumpets sound; and the king, amidst these acclamations and rejoicings, advances to the foot of the stair of the church, where he dismounts, and there sits down upon a stone, which, by its remains, apparently was an altar of Anubis, or the dog-star: At his feet there is a large slab of free-stone, on which is the inscription mentioned by Poncet, and which shall be quoted hereafter, when I come to speak of the ruins of Axum.

After the king comes to the nebrit, or keeper of the book of the law in Axum, supposed to represent

Azarias the son of Zadock ; then the twelve umbares, or supreme judges, who with Azarias, accompanied Menilek, the son of Solomon, when he brought the book of the law from Jerusalem, and these are supposed to represent the twelve tribes. After these follow the Abuna at the head of the priests, and the Itchegué at the head of the monks ; then the court, who all pass through the aperture made by the division of the silk cord which remains still upon the ground.

The king is first anointed, then crowned, and is accompanied half up the steps by the singing priests, called Depteras, chaunting psalms and hymns. Here he stops at a hole made for the purpose in one of the steps, and is there fumigated with incense and myrrh, aloes and cassia. Divine service is then celebrated : and, after receiving the sacrament, he returns to the camp, where fourteen days should regularly be spent in feasting, and all manner of rejoicing and military exercise.

The king is, by the old custom, obliged to give a number of presents, the particulars of which are stated in the destar, or treasury-book, the value, the person to whom they are due, and the time of giving ; but a great part of these are gone into desuetude since the removal of the court from Tigré, as also many of the offices are now suppressed, and with them the presents due to them.

The nobles and the court were likewise obliged to give presents to the king upon that occasion. The present from the governor of Axum is two lions and a fillet of silk, upon which is wrote,

“ Mo Anbasa am Nizilet Solomon am Negade Jude—

“ The

“The lion of the tribe of Judah and race of Solomon hath overcome;” this serves as a form of investiture of lands that the king grants, a riband bearing this inscription being tied round the head of the person to whom the lands are given.

This governor was then in rebellion, so did not assist at the ceremony. Notwithstanding the difference of expence which I have mentioned, by suppressing places, presents, and dues, the king Tecla Haimanout told me at Gondar, that when he was in Tigré, driven there by the late rebellion, Ras Michael had some thoughts of having him crowned there in contempt of his enemies; but, by the most moderate calculation that could be made, not to turn the ceremony into ridicule by parsimony, it would have cost 20,000 ounces of gold, or L. 50,000 Sterling; upon which he laid aside the thoughts of it, saying to the king, “Sir, trust to me, 20,000 ounces of Tigré iron shall crown you better; if more is wanted, I will bestow it upon your enemies with pleasure till they are satisfied;” meaning the iron balls with which his soldiers loaded their musquets.

After the coronation was over, the king passed the Mareb, desiring to finish his campaign by the death of his competitor Jacob; but that impostor knew too well the superiority of his rival, and hid himself in the inmost recesses, without other attendants than a few goats, who furnished him with their milk, as well as their society.

Socinius left the affair of the rebel Jacob to be ended by Amfala Christos, an officer of great prudence, whom he made governor of Tigré; and, taking

taking his brother Ras Sela Christos along with him, returned to Coga*. Amsala Christos being seized with a grievous sickness, saw how vain it was for him to pursue the suppression of a rebellion conducted by such a head as this impostor Jacob, and therefore secretly applied to two young men, Zara Johannes and Amha Georgis, brothers, and sons of the Shum Welled Georgis, who had committed murder, and were outlawed by Socinios, and, keeping hid in the mountains, had joined in fellowship with the impostor Jacob.

These, gained by the promise of pardon given them by Amsala Christos, chose an opportunity which their intimacy gave them, and, falling upon Jacob unawares in his retirement, they slew him, cut his head off, and sent it to the king at Coga, who received it very thankfully, and returned it to Tigré to Amsala Christos, to be exposed publicly in all the province to undeceive the people; for it now appeared, that he had neither scars in his face, broken jaw, nor loss of teeth, but that the covering was intended only to conceal the little resemblance he bore to king Jacob, slain, as we have seen, at the battle of Lebart; and he was now found to have been a herdsman, in those very mountains of Bisan to which he had so often fled for refuge while his rebellion lasted.

The king, in his return from Tigre, passing by Fremona, sent to the Jesuits there thirty ounces of gold, about L. 75 Sterling, for their immediate exigency; testifying, in the most gracious manner, his

* Then the metropolis upon the Lake Tzana.

his regret, "That the many affairs in which he was engaged had prevented him from hearing mass in their convent, as he very sincerely wished to do; but he left with them the Abuna Simon to whom he had recommended to study their religion, and be a friend to it."

In this he shewed his want of penetration and experience; for though he had seen wars between soldier and soldier, who, after having been in the most violent state of enmity, had died in defence of each other as friends, he was not aware of that degree of enmity which reigns upon difference of opinion, not to say religion, between priest and priest. It was not long, however, before he saw it, and the example was in the person of his present friend the Abuna Simon.

While Socinius was yet in Tigre, news were brought to Coga from Woggora to Sanuda Tzef Lenam* of Dembea, who could not accompany the king to Tigre on account of sickness, but was left with the charge of the capital and palace during the king's absence, that Melchizedec, one of the meanest and lowest servants of the late king Melec Segued, had rebelled, and was collecting troops, consisting of soldiers, servants, and dependents of that prince, and had slain some of Socinius's servants. Sanuda was a brave and active officer; but, being without troops, (the king having carried the whole army to Tigre) immediately set out from Maitsha to the town of Tchelga, one of the
frontiers

* Register of the cattle; so the governor of Dembea is called.

frontiers of Abyssinia, possessed by Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs.

It is here to be observed, that though the territorial right of Tchelga did then, and does still appertain to the kingdom of Abyssinia, yet the possession of it is ceded by agreement to Wed Ageeb, under whose protection the caravans from Egypt and Sennaar, and those from Abyssinia to Sennaar and Egypt, were understood to be ever since they were cut off in the last century by the basha of Suakem, for this purpose, that a customhouse might be erected, and the duties divided between the two kingdoms equally. The same is the case with Serke, a town belonging to Sennaar, ceded for the same purpose to the king of Abyssinia.

It happened that Abdelcader †, son of Ounfa late king of Sennaar, or of Funge, as he is called in the Abyssinian annals, had been deposed by his subjects in the 4th year of his reign, and remained at Tchlega under the mutual protection of Wed Ageeb and the emperor of Abyssinia, a kind of prisoner to them both; and had brought with him a number of soldiers and dependents, the partakers of his former good fortune, who, finding safety and good usage at Tchelga, were naturally well-affected to the king. These, ready mounted and armed, joined Sanuda immediately upon his declaring the exigency; and with these he marched straight to Coga, to the defence of the palace with which he had been intrusted.

Melchizedec,

† See the History of the rise of this monarchy in my return through Sennaar.

Melchizedec, whose design was against Coga, no sooner heard Sanuda was arrived there than he marched to surprize him, and a very bloody and obstinate engagement followed. The Funge, piqued in honour to render this service to their protector, fought so obstinately that they were all slain, and Sanuda, mounted that day upon a fleet horse belonging to Socinios, escaped with difficulty, much wounded.

As soon as Socinios heard of this misfortune, he sent Ras Emana Christos, who marched straight to Woggora, creating Zenobius, son of Imael, governor of that district; and there he found Zanuda Zenobius and Ligaba Za Dengbel together, in a place called Deberaffo.

As soon as the rebel Melchizedec heard Emana Christos was come, and with him the fore-mentioned noblemen, he set himself to exert the utmost of his power to draw together forces of all kinds from every part he could get them, and his army was soon increased to such a degree as, notwithstanding the presence of Emana Christos, to strike terror into all the territory and towns of Dembea. Nothing was wanted but a king of the royal race for whom to fight. Without a chief of this kind, it was evident that the army, however often successful, would at last disperse. They, therefore, brought one Arzo, a prince of the royal blood, from his hiding-place in Begemder. Arzo, in return for a throne, conferred the place of Ras upon Melchizedec. Za Christos, son of Hatzir Abib, was appointed to the command of the army under him; and, having finished this and many such necessary

cessary preparatives, they marched straight to meet Emaná Christos, with a better countenance than rebel armies generally bear.

It was the 9th of March 1611, at 9 in the morning, when the two armies were first in sight of each other, nor did they long delay coming to an engagement. The battle was very obstinate and bloody; Melchizedec re-established his character for worth, at least as a soldier; the same did Za Christos. Of the competitor Arzo, history makes no mention; his blood, probably, was too precious to risk the spilling of it, being so far-fetched as from king Solomon. After a most obstinate resistance, part of Za Christos's army was broken and put to flight; but it rallied so often, and sold the ground it yielded so dear, that it gave time to Emaná Christos to come up to his army's assistance.

The Ras, who was as brave a soldier as he was a wise and prudent general, saw it was a time when all should be risked, and threw himself into the midst of his enemies; and he was now arrived near the place where Melchizedec fought, when that rebel, seeing him advancing so fast among his slaughtered followers, guessing his intention, declined the combat, turned his horse and fled, while affairs even yet appeared in his favour. This panic of the general had the effect it ordinarily has in barbarous armies. Nobody considered how the prospect of the general issue stood; they fled with Melchizedec, and lost more men than would have secured them victory had they stood in their ranks.

A body of troops, joined by some peasants of Begemder, pursued Melchizedec so closely that they came up with him and took him prisoner, together with Tenfa Christos, a very active partizan and enemy to Emana Christos. Having brought them to the camp, before the Ras returned to Coga, they were tried and condemned to die for rebellion, as traitors, and the sentence immediately executed, after which their heads were sent to the king. Very soon after this, Arzo, and his general Za Christos, were taken and sent to the king, who ordered them to be tried by the judges in common form, and they underwent the same fate.

The king was employed in the winter season while he resided at Coga, in building a new church, called St. Gabriel. But the season of taking the field being come, he marched out with his army and halted at Gogora, sending Emana Christos and Sela Christos against the rebels; these were not in a particular clan, or province, for all the country was in rebellion, from the head of the Nile round, eastward, to the frontiers of Tigre. Part of them indeed were not in arms, but refused to pay their quota of the revenue; part of them were in arms, and would neither pay, nor admit a governor from the king among them; others willingly submitted to Socinios, and were armed, only thereby to exempt themselves from payment.

Sela Christos fell upon the inhabitants of the mountainous district of Gufman, on the Nile, whose principal strong-hold, Ouree Amba, he forced, killing many, and carrying away their children as slaves, which, upon the intercession of

Peter Paez, were given to the Jesuits to be educated as Catholics.

The next attempt was upon the Gongas, a black Pagan nation, with which he had the same success; the rest were the Agows, a very numerous people, all confederates and in arms, and not willing to hear of any composition. The king ordered one of these tribes, the Zalabassa, to be extirpated as far as possible, and their country laid waste. But notwithstanding this example, which met with great interruption in the execution, the Agows continued in rebellion for several years afterwards, but much impoverished and lessened in number by variety of victories obtained over them.

The two next years were spent in unimportant skirmishes with the Agows of Damot, and with the Galla, invaders of Gojam. In 1615, the year after, Tecla Georgis made governor of Samen, and Welled Hawaryat, shum of Tsalemat *, were both sent against a rebel who declared himself competitor for the crown. His name was Amdo. He pretended to be the late king Jacob son of Melec Segued; and this character he gave himself, without the smallest communication with the relations or connections of that prince. As soon as Affera Christos and Tecla Garima, servants of Welled Hawaryat, heard of this adventurer, they surprised him in Tsalemat, and, putting him in irons, confined him in the house of Affera Christos.

Gideon, king of the Jews, whose residence was on the high mountain of Samen, upon hearing that

Amdo

* A low territory at the foot of Lamalmon.

Amdo was prisoner, sent a body of armed men who surpris'd Affera Christos in his own house in the night, and killed him, bringing with them his prisoner Amdo to Samen, and delivered him to Gideon there; who not only took him into protection, but assisted him in raising an army by every means in his power. There were not wanting there idle vagabonds and lawless people enough, who fled to the standard of a prince whose sole view seemed to be murder, robbery, and all sort of licentiousness. It was not long till Amdo, by the assistance of Gideon, found himself at the head of an army, strong enough to leave the mountain, and try his fortune in the plain below, where he laid waste Shawada, Tfaemat, and all the countries about Samen which persevered in their duty to the king.

Socinius, upon this, appointed Julius, his son-in-law governor of Woggora, Samen, Waag, and Abbergale, that is, of all the low countries from the borders of the Tacazze to Dembea. Abram, an old officer of the king, desirous to stop the progress of the rebel, marched towards him, and offered him battle; but that brave officer had not the success his intention deserved, for he was defeated and slain; which had such an effect upon Julius, that, without hazarding his fortune farther, he sent to beseech the king to march against Amdo with all possible expedition, as his affairs were become desperate in that part of his dominions.

The king hereupon marched straight to Woggora, and joined Julius at Shimbra-Zuggan; thence he descended from Samen, and encamped upon Tocur-

Ohha, (the black river) thence he proceeded to Debil, and then to Sobra; and from this last station he sent a detachment of his army to attack a strong mountain called Messiraba, one of the natural fortresses of Gideon, which was forced by the king's troops after some resistance, and the whole inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex, put to the sword, for such were the orders of the king.

This first success very much disheartened the rebels, for Messiraba was, by nature, one of the strongest mountains, and it, besides, had been fortified by art, furnished with plenty of provisions, and a number of good troops. The next mountain Socinios attacked was Hotchi, and the third Amba Za Hancasse, where he had the like success, and treated the inhabitants in the same manner; thence he removed his army to Seganat, where he met with a very stout resistance; but this mountain, too, was at last taken, Gideon himself escaping narrowly by the bravery of his principal general, who, fighting desperately, was slain by a musqueteer.

The constant success of the king, and the bloody manner in which he pursued his victory, began to alarm Gideon, lest the end should be the extirpation of his whole nation. He, therefore, made an overture to the king, that, if he would pardon him and grant him peace, he would deliver the rebel Amdo bound into his hands.

The king assented to this, and Amdo was accordingly delivered up; and, being convicted of rebellion and murder, he was sentenced to be nailed to a cross, and to remain there till he died. But the
terrible

terrible cries and groans which he made while they were fixing him to the cross, so much shocked the ears of the king, that he ordered him to be taken down, and his head struck off with an ax, which was executed in the midst of the camp.

Socinius after this retired to Dancaz, and ordered Kefla governor of Gojam, and Jonael his master of the household, to march suddenly and surprize Belaya, a country belonging to the Gongas and Guba, Pagan nations, on whom, every year, he made war for the sake of taking slaves for the use of the palace. These two officers, with a large body, mostly horse, fell unawares upon the savages at Belaya, slaying part, and bringing away their children. But not content with doing this, they likewise attacked the two districts of Agows, Dengui and Sankara, then in peace with the king, and drove away an immense number of cattle, which the king no sooner heard, than he ordered a strict search to be made, and the whole cattle belonging to the Agows to be gathered together, and restored to their respective owners; a piece of justice which softened the hearts of this people more than all the severities that had been hitherto used; and the good effects of which were soon after seen upon the Agows, though it produced something very different in the conduct of Jonael.

The king this year, 1616, left his capital at the usual time, in the month of November, and ordered his whole household to attend him. His intention was against the Galla on the west of Gojam, especially the tribe called Libo. But this campaign was rendered fruitless by the death of the king's eldest son,

son, Kennasser Christos, a young prince of great hopes, esteemed both by the king and the people. He had an excellent understanding, and the most affable manners possible, to those even whom he did not like; was very fond of the soldiers; merciful, generous, and liberal; and was thought to be the favourite of the king his father, who buried him with great pomp in the church of Debra Roma, built by king Isaac, in the lake Tzana.

In the midst of this mourning, there came a very bloody order * from the king. History barely tells us the fact, but does not assign any other reason than the wanton manner in which Gideon king of the Jews had endeavoured to disturb his reign and kingdom, which was thought a sufficient excuse for it. However this may be, the king gave orders to Kasmati Julius, Kasmati Welled Hawaryat, Biletana Gueta Jonael, and Fit-Auraris Hofannah, to extirpate all the Falasha that were in Foggora, Janfakara, and Bagenarwe, to the borders of Samen; also all that were in Bagla, and in all the districts under their command, wherever they could find them; and very few of them escaped, excepting some who fled with Phineas.

In this massacre, which was a very general one, and executed very suddenly, fell Gideon king of that people; a man of great reputation, not only among his subjects, but throughout all Abyssinia, reputed also immensely rich. His treasures, supposed to be concealed in the mountains, are the objects,

* It was probably part of the fruits of the new religion, and the work of his new religious advisers.

objects of the search of the Abyssinians to this day.

The children of those that were slain were sold for slaves by the king; and all the Falasha in Dembea, in the low countries immediately in the king's power, were ordered upon pain of death to renounce their religion, and be baptised. To this they consented, seeing there was no remedy; and the king unwisely imagined, that he had extinguished, by one blow, the religion which was that of his country long before Christianity, by the unwarrantable butchery of a number of people whom he had surpris'd living in security under the assurance of peace. Many of them were baptised accordingly, and they were all ordered to plow and harrow upon the sabbath-day.

The king next sent orders to Sela Christos, and Kessa governor of Gojam, that, assembling their troops, they should transfer the war into Eizamo, a province on the south side of the Nile, called also in the books a kingdom. Through this lies the road of the merchants leading to Narea. It is inhabited by several clans of Pagans, which together make the great division of these nations into Boren, and Bertuma Galla*.

The army pass'd the Nile, laying waste the whole country, driving off the cattle, collecting the women and children as slaves, and putting all the men to the sword; without these people, though they make constant inroads into Gojam, appearing any

* The words, Boren, and Bertuma Galla, have no meaning in the Ethiopic.

where in force to stop the defolation of their country. The whole tract between Narea and the Nile was now cleared of enemies, and a number of priests at that time sent to revive drooping Christianity in those parts.

In the year 1617, a league was again made among the Boren Galla, that part of them should invade Gojam, while the others (namely the Marawa) should enter Begemder. Upon hearing this the king in haste marched to Begemder, that he might be ready in case of need to assist Tigre. He then fixed his head-quarters at Shima, but from this he speedily removed; and, passing Emfras, came to Dobot, a favourite residence of the emperor Jacob, where he held a council to determine which of the two provinces he should first assist.

It was the general opinion of his officers, that to march at that time of the year into Tigre, by Begemder was to destroy the army, and distress both provinces; that an army, well provided with horse, was necessary for acting with success against the Galla, and that in effect, though the royal army at present was so appointed, yet there was no grass at that time of the year in all that march for the subsistence of the cavalry, and very little water for the use of man or beast, an inconvenience the Galla themselves must experience if they attempted an invasion that way. It was, moreover, urged, that, if the king should march through Woggora and Lamalmon, they might get more food for their beasts, and water too; but then they would throw themselves far from the place where the Galla had entered, and would be obliged to fall into the former road, with
the

the inconveniencies already stated. The consequence of this deliberation was, that it was with very great regret the good of the commonweal obliged them to leave Tigre to the protection of Providence alone for a time, and hasten to meet the enemy that were then laying Gojam waste.

With this view the king left Dobit, and came to the river Gomara in Foggora. He then passed the Nile near Dara, and came to Selalo, where he heard that the Djawi had passed the Nile from Bizamo, and entered Gojam at the opposite side to where he then was. He there left his baggage, and, by a forced march, advancing three days journey in one, he came to Bed, upon the river Sadi; but, instead of finding the enemy there, he received intelligence from Sela Christos, that he had met the Galla immediately after their passing the Nile; had fought them, and cut their army to pieces, without allowing them time to ravage the country.

Upon this good news the king turned off on the road to Tchegal and Wainadassa, and ordered Bela Christos to assemble as great an army as he could, and fall upon the Djawi and Galla in Walaka and Shoa, as also Ras Sela Christos, to pass the Nile and join him there.

That general lost no time, but marched straight to Amca Ohha, or the the river Amca, where he found the Edjow, who fled upon his coming, without giving him any opportunity of bringing them to an engagement, abandoning their wives, children, and substance, to the mercy of the enemy. Sela Christos, having finished this expedition as he intended, returned to join the king, whom he

found encamped upon the river Suqua, near Debra Werk, guarding those provinces in the absence of Sela Christos. From this the king, retreating towards Dembea, passed the Nile near Dara, and encamped at Zinzenam, whence he marched round the lake into Dembea to his palace at Gorgora.

This village, whose name signifies *rain upon rain*, affords us a proof of what I have said in speaking of the cause of the overflowing of the Nile, in contradicition to the Adulitic inscription, that no snow falls in Abyssinia, or rather, that though snow may have fallen in the course of centuries, it is a phænomenon so rare as not to have a name or word to express it in the whole language, and is entirely unknown to the people in general, at least to the west of the Tecazze.

The Abyssinian historian, from whom these memoirs are composed, says, “That this village, called Zinzenam, has its name from an extraordinary circumstance that once happened in these parts, for a shower of rain fell, which was not properly of the nature of rain, as it did not run upon the ground, but remained very light, having scarce the weight of feathers, of a beautiful white colour like flour; it fell in showers, and occasioned a darkness in the air more than rain, and like to mist. It covered the face of the whole country for several days, retaining its whiteness the whole time, then went away like dew, without leaving any smell or unwholesome effect behind it.”

This was certainly the accidental phænomenon of a day; for, notwithstanding the height of the mountains Taranta and Lamalmon, snow never was seen there, at least for ages past; and Lasta, in whose mountains

mountains armies have perished by cold, as far as a very particular inquiry could go, never yet had snow upon them; and Zinzenam is not in these mountains, or in any elevated situation. On the contrary, it is adjoining to the plain country of Foggora, near where it borders upon Begemder, not above 20 miles from the second cataract, or 40 miles from Gondar; so that this must have been a short and accidental change of the atmosphere, of which there are examples of many different-kinds, in the histories of all countries.

As soon as the weather permitted, the king left his palace at Gorgora in the way to Tocussa, where he staid several days; removed thence to Tenkel, where he continued also four days, and proceeded to Gunke, where he halted. From his head-quarters at Gunke, the king meditating an expedition against Atbara, sent a messenger to Nile Wed Ageeb, prince of the Arabs, desiring a meeting with him before he attacked the Funge, for so they call the subjects of the new monarchy, lately established at Senaar by the conquest of the Arabs, under Wed Ageeb, a very considerable part of whose territory they had taken by force, and now enjoyed as their own possessions.

Abdelcader, son of Ounsa, was the ninth prince of the race of Funge then reigning; a weak, and ill-inclined man, but with whom Socinios had hitherto lived in friendship, and, in a late treaty, had sent him as a present, a nagareet, or kettledrum, richly ornamented with gold; with a gold chain to hang it by. Abdelcader, on his part, returned

turned to Socinios a trained falcon, of an excellent kind, very much esteemed among the Arabs.

Soon after this, Abdelcader was deposed by his brother Adelan, son of Ounfa, and fled to Tchelga, under protection of the king of Abyssinia, who allowed him an honourable maintenance; a custom always observed in such cases in the East, by princes towards their unfortunate neighbours.

Baady, son of Abdelcader, an active and violent young prince, although he deposed his uncle Adelan, took this protection of his father in bad part. It was likewise suggested to him, that the present sent by Socinios, a nagareet, or kettle-drum, imported, that Socinios considered him as his vassal, the drum being the sign of investiture sent by the king to any one of his subjects whom he appoints to govern a province, and that the return of the falcon was likely to be considered as the acknowledgment of a vassal to his superior. Baady, upon his accession to the throne, was resolved to rectify this too great respect shewn on the part of his father, by an affront he resolved to offer. With this view, he sent to Socinios two old, blind, and lame horses.

Socinios took this amiss, as it was intended he should, and the slight was immediately followed by the troops of Atbara, under Nile Wed Ageeb, sent by Baady to make an inroad into Abyssinia, to lay waste the country, and drive off the people, with orders to sell them as slaves.

Among the most active in this expedition, were those of the town of Serke. When Baady complained that his father and rival was protected in

his own town of Tchelga, it had been answered, That true it was, Tchelga had been ceded and did belong to Sennaar, for every purpose of revenue, but that the sovereignty of the place had never been alienated or surrendered to the king of Sennaar, but remained now, as ever, vested in the king of Abyssinia. Serke stood precisely in the same situation with respect to Abyssinia, as Tchelga did to Sennaar, when Socinius demanded satisfaction for the violence committed against him by his own town of Serke. The same answer was given him, That for all fiscal purposes Serke was his, but owed him no allegiance; for, being part of the kingdom of Sennaar, it was bound to assist its sovereign in all wars against his enemies.

Socinius, deeply engaged in the troubles that attended the beginning of his reign, passed over for a time both the affront and injury, but sent into Atbara to Nile Wed Ageeb, proposing a treaty with him independent of the king of Sennaar.

There were, at this time, three sorts of people that inhabited the whole country from lat 13° (the mountains of Abyssinia) to the tropic of Cancer (the frontiers of Egypt.) The first was the Funge, or negroes, established in Atbara since the year 1504, by conquest. The second, the old inhabitants of that country, known in very early ages by the name of *Shepherds*, which continues with them to this day; and these lived under a female government. The third, the Arabs, who came hither after the conquest of Egypt, in an army under Caled Ibn el Waalid, or Saif Ullah, *the Sword of God*, during the Khalifat of Omar, destined to subdue, Nubia,

Nubia, and, still later, in the time of Salidan and his brother.

These Arabs had associated with the first inhabitants, the Shepherds, from a similarity of life and manners, and, by treaty, the Funge had established a tribute to be paid them from both; after which, these were to enjoy their former habitations without further molestation.

This prince of the Arabs, Nile Wed Ageeb, embraced the offer of the king of Abyssinia very readily; and a treaty was accordingly made between Socinios and him, and a territory in Abyssinia granted him on the frontiers, to which he could retire in safety, as often as his affairs were embroiled with the state of Sennaar.

It happened soon after this, that Alico a Mahometan governor of the Mazaga for Socinios, that is, of Nara and Ras el Feel, a low country, as the name imports, of black earth, revolted from his master, and fled to Sennaar, carrying with him a number of the king's horses. Socinios made his complaint to the king of Sennaar, who took no notice of it, neither returned any answer, which exasperated Socinios so much that it produced the present expedition, and was a cause of much bloodshed, and of a war which, at least in intentions, lasts to this day between the two kingdoms.

Wed Ageeb, upon Socinios's first summons, came to Gunke, his head-quarters, attended by a number of troops, and some of the best horse in Atbara. Upon his entering the king's tent, he prostrated himself, (as is the Abyssinian custom) acknowledged himself the king's vassal and brought
presents

presents with him to a very considerable value. Socinius received him with great marks of distinction and kindness. He decorated him with a chain and bracelets of gold, and gave him a dagger of exquisite workmanship, mounted with the same metal; clothed him in silk and damask after the Abyssinian fashion, and confirmed the ancient treaty with him. The fruit of all this was presently seen; the king and his new ally fell suddenly upon Serke, put all the male inhabitants to the sword, sold the women and children as slaves, and burned the town to the ground. The same they did to every inhabited place on that side of the frontier, west to Fazuelo. After which, the king, having sent a sarcastic compliment to Baady, returned to Dancaz, taking Wed Ageeb with him.

Socinius had only ravaged the frontier of the kingdom of Sennaar to the westward, from Serke towards Fazuelo. This was but a part of the large scheme of vengeance he had resolved to execute progressively from Serke, in reparation of the affront he had received from the king of the Funge. But he delegated what remained to the two princes his sons, and to the governor of Tigre.

Welled Hawaryat, at the head of the Koccob horse, and another body of cavalry reckoned equal in valour, called *Maia*, and the greatest part of the king's household troops, were ordered to fall upon that part of the frontier of Sennaar which the king had left from Serke eastward. Melca Christos, with the horse of Sire and Samen, was appointed to attack the frontier still farther east, opposite to the province of Sire. Tecla Georgis, governor of
Tigre,

Tigre, was directed to lay waste that part of the kingdom of Sennaar bordering upon the frontiers of his province.

The whole of this expedition succeeded to a wish; only Melca Christos, in passing through the country of Shangalla, was met by a large army of that people, who, thinking the expedition intended against them, had attacked him in his passage, with some appearance of advantage; but by his own exertions, and those of his troops alarmed at their prince's danger, he not only extricated himself from the bad situation he was in, but gave the Shangalla so entire an overthrow, that one of their tribes was nearly exterminated by that day's slaughter, and crowds of women and children sent slaves to the king at Dancaz.

The delay that this occasioned had no bad effect upon the expedition. The victorious troops poured immediately into Atbara under Melca Christos, and completed the destruction made by Welled Hawaryat, and the governor of Tigre. All Sennaar was filled with people flying from the conquerors, and an immense number of cattle was driven away by the three armies. Baady seems to have been an idle spectator of this havock made in his kingdom; and the armies returned without loss to Dancaz, loaded with plunder.

Still the vengeance of Socinios was not satisfied. The Baharnagash, Guebra Mariam, was commanded to march against Fatima queen of the Shepherds, called at that time Negusta Errum, queen of the Greeks. This was a princess who governed the remnant of that ancient race of people, once
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the sovereigns of the whole country, who, for several dynasties, were masters of Egypt, and who still among their ancient customs, preserved that known one, of always placing a woman upon the throne. Her residence was at Mendera*, on the N. E. of Atbara, one of the largest and most populous towns in it; a town, indeed, built like the rest, of clay, straw, and reeds, but not less populous or flourishing on that account. It was in the way of the caravans from Suakem, both to Abyssinia and Sennaar, as also of those large caravans to and from Sudan, the Negro country upon the Niger, which then came, and still use that road in their way to Mecca. Its female sovereign was considered as guardian of that communication, and the caravans passing it.

The Baharnagash had in orders from Socinios to pursue this queen till he had taken her prisoner, and to bring her in that condition into his presence. The enterprise was by no means an easy one. Great part of the road was without water; but Guebra Mariam, the Baharnagash, was an active and prudent officer, and perfectly acquainted with the several parts of the country. With a small, but veteran army, he marched down the Mareb, between that river and the mountains, destroying all the places through which he passed, putting the inhabitants unmercifully to the sword, that no one might approach him, nor any report be made of his numbers, which were every where magnified by those that escaped, and who computed them from
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* See the Map.

the greatness of the desolation they had occasioned.

On the 13th day he came before Mendera, and sent a summons to the queen Fatima to surrender. Being told that she had fled on his approach, he answered, That he cared not where she was; but that, unless she surrendered herself prisoner before he entered Mendera, he would first set the town on fire, and then quench the flames by the blood of its inhabitants.

Fatima, though old and infirm, was too great a lover of her people to risk the fulfilling this threat from any consideration of what might happen to her. She surrendered herself to Guebra Mariam, with two attendants; and he, without loss of time, marched back to his own country, abstaining from every sort of violence or excess in his way, from respect to his female prisoner, whom he brought in triumph before Socinios to Dancaz, and was the first messenger of his own victory.

Socinios received this queen of the Greeks on his throne; but, in consideration of her infirmities, dispensed with the ceremony of prostration, constantly observed in Abyssinia on being introduced to the presence of the king: seeing that she was unable to stand during the time of her interrogation, he ordered a low stool to be set for her on the ground; a piece of consideration very rarely shewn to any stranger in Abyssinia, however great their dignity and quality.

Socinios sternly demanded of his prisoner, "Why she and her predecessors, being vassals to the crown of Abyssinia, had not only omitted the
payment

payment of their tribute, but had not even sent the customary presents to him upon his accession to the throne?"

To this the queen answered with great frankness and candour, "That it was true, such tributes and presents were due, and were also punctually paid from old times by her ancestors to his, as long as protection was afforded them and their people, and this was the principal cause of paying that tribute; but the Abyssinians having first suffered the country to be in great part conquered by the Arabs, and then again by the Funge, without ever interfering, she had concluded a peace with the Funge of Sennaar, and paid the tribute to them, in consequence of which they defended her from the Arabs: That she had had no soldiers but such as were employed in keeping a strict watch over the road through the desert to Suakem, which was anciently trusted to her; that the other part of her subjects was occupied in keeping and rearing great herds of cattle for the markets of Sennaar and other towns, as well as camels for the caravans of Mecca, Cairo, and Sudan, both employments being of public benefit; and, therefore, as she did harm to none, she had a greater reason to wonder what could be his motive of sending so far from home to seek her, and her harmless subjects, in the desert, with such effusion of innocent blood."

The king hearing this sagacious answer, which was followed by many others of the kind, was extremely pleased; but assured her, "That he intended to maintain his ancient right both over her subjects, and the Arabs under Wed Ageeb, who was

now his vassal, in all the country from Fazuclo to Suakem; that he considered the Funge as usurpers, and would certainly treat them as such." After this Socinios dismissed the queen, and gave her assurances of protection, having first cloathed her as his vassal in silk and damask, after the fashion of women in her own country.

But it was not long before this train of success met with a considerable check. Very soon afterwards the king being in Gojam, a message was brought to him from the principal people of Narea, informing him plainly, "That Benero, having become cruel and avaricious, put many people to death wantonly, and many more for the sake of their money; having taken from them their wives and daughters, either for his own pleasure, or to sell them as slaves to the Galla—they had at last murdered him, and chosen a man in his room distinguished for his virtue and goodness."

The king was very much exasperated at this message. He told them, however bad Benero might have been, he considered his murder as an insult done to himself, and had, therefore, dispatched Mustapha Basha with some troops, and given command to all the Mahometans in Narea to assist him, and to inquire into the death of Benero, and the merit of his successor.

At the same time, the Galla made an inroad into Begemder; and Welled Hawaryat, assembling what troops he could, in haste, to stop the desolation of that province, and having come in sight of the enemy, he was forsaken by his army, and slain, together with the Cantiba of Dembea, Amdo, and Nile

Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs, after fighting manfully for the king. Socinios, upon the arrival of this news, gave himself up to immoderate sorrow; not so much for the loss of his army which had misbehaved, as for the death of Welled Hawaryat his favourite son, and Amdo and Nile, the two best officers in his army.

It will now be necessary that we look back a little to the state of religious affairs in Abyssinia, which began from this time to have influence in every measure, and greatly to promote the troubles of that empire; though they were by no means their only cause, as some have said, with a view to throw greater odium upon the Jesuits, who surely have enough to answer for, without inflaming the account by any exaggeration.

Paez, in the course of building the palace at Gorgora, had deservedly astonished the whole kingdom by a display of his universal genius and capacity. If he was assiduous and diligent in raising this fabric, he had not neglected the advancing of another, the conversion of Abyssinia to the obedience of the see of Rome.

Ras Sela Christos (if we believe these missionaries) had converted himself, by reading with attention the Abyssinian books only. Being about to depart from Gojam to fight against the Galla, he wanted very much to have made his renunciation and confession in the presence of Peter Paez. But, as he was busied at Gorgora building a convent and palace there, he contented himself with another Jesuit, Francisco Antonio d'Angelis; and, being victorious in his expedition, he gave the fathers ground

ground and a sum of money to build a monastery at Collela, which was now the third in Abyssinia belonging to the Jesuits.

As for the king, though probably already determined in his own mind, he had not taken any step so decisive as could induce the compliance of others. Disputes were constantly maintained, for the most part in his presence, between the missionaries and the Abyssinian monks, chiefly concerning the long-agitated question, the two natures in Christ, in which, although the victory declared always in favour of the Jesuits, if we may credit their representations, no conviction followed on the part of the adversaries. At last Abuna Simon complained to the king, that unusual and irregular things had been permitted without his knowledge; that disputes upon articles of faith had been held without calling him, or his being permitted to give his clergy the advantage of his support in these controversies.

The king, who did not believe that the Abuna's eloquence or learning would make any great alteration, ordered the disputations to be held a-new in the Abuna's presence. That priest's ignorance made the matter worse; and the king, holding this point as now settled, made his first public declaration, that there were two natures in Christ, perfect God and perfect man, really distinct between themselves, but united in one divine person, which is the Christ.

At this time, letters came by way of India, both from the king of Spain, Philip II. dated in Madrid the 15th of March 1609, and from the pope Paul

V. of the 4th of January 1611. These letters contain nothing but general declamatory exhortations to Socinius to persevere in the Christian faith, assuring him of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, instead of those Portuguese regiments which he had solicited. However, the affair of the conversion being altogether settled between the king and Paez, it was thought proper to make the renunciation first, and then depend upon the king of Spain and the pope for sending the soldiers, if their prayers were not effectual.

It was necessary that Socinius should write to the pope notifying his submission to the see of Rome. But letters on such a subject were thought of too great consequence to be sent, as former dispatches to Europe had been, without being accompanied by proper persons, who, upon occasion, might assume the character of ambassadors, and give any assurance or explanation needful.

It was at the same time considered, that the way by Masuah was so liable to accidents, the intermediate province of Tigré being still as it were in a state of rebellion, that it would be easy for the enemies of the Catholic faith to intercept these messengers and letters by the way, so that their contents might be published amongst the king's enemies in Abyssinia, without ever being made known in Europe. Some proposed the longer, but, as they apprehended, the more secure way, by passing Narea and the provinces south of the frontiers of that kingdom, partly inhabited by Gentiles, partly by Mahometans, to Melinda, on the Indian Ocean, where they might embark for Goa.

Lots were cast among the missionaries who of their number should undertake this long and dangerous journey. The lot fell upon Antonio Fernandes, a man of great prudence, much esteemed by the king, and by the general voice allowed to be the properest of all the society for this undertaking. He, on his part, named Fecur Egzie (*beloved of the Lord*) as his companion, to be ambassador to the king of Spain and the pope. This man had been one of the first of the Abyssinians converted to the Catholic faith by the Jesuits, and he continued in it steadily to his death. He was a person of tried courage and prudence, and of a pleasant and agreeable conversation.

It was the beginning of March 1613 Antonio Fernandes * set out for Gōjam, where was Ras Sela Christos. Fecur Egzie had set out before, that he might adjust his family affairs, and took with him ten Portuguese, six of whom were to go no farther than Narea, and return, the other four to embark with him for India.

The governor detained the small company till he procured guides from among the Shats and Gallas, barbarous nations near Narea, and eastward of it, from whom he took hostages for properly protecting this caravan in their way, paying them well, as an encouragement for behaving honestly and faithfully.

On the 15th of April they had set out from Umbarma, then the head-quarters of Sela Christos, who gave

* See the provincial letters of the Jesuits in Tellez, lib. iv. cap. 5.

gave them for guards forty men armed with shields and javelins. Nor was it long before their difficulties began. Travelling about two days to the west, they came to Senaffé, the principal village or habitation of the Pagan Gongas, very recently in rebellion, and nearly destroyed, rather than subdued. To the first demand of safe-conduct, they answered in a manner which shewed that, far from defending the travellers from others, they were resolved themselves to fall upon them, and rob or murder them in the way. One Portuguese offered himself to return with Fernandes to complain of these savages to Sela Christos; who, upon their arrival, dispatched three officers with troops to chastise these Pagans, and convey the ambassador and his attendants out of their territory and reach.

The Gongas, being informed that a complaint was sent to Sela Christos, which would infallibly be followed by a detachment of troops, gave the ambassador the safeguard he demanded, which carried him in three days to Minè*. This is the name of some miserable villages, often rebuilt, and as often destroyed, upon a ford of the Nile, over which is the ordinary passage for the Mahometan merchants into Bizamo, the way to the mountainous country of Narea and Caffa. As the rains had begun to fall here with violence, when Fernandes and his companions arrived, they were obliged to pass the river on skins blown full of wind.

The distance from Mine to Narea is 50 leagues due south, with little inclination to west. The

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road

* Which signifies the Passage.

road to it, and the places through which you pass, are very distinctly set down in my map, and, I believe, without any material error; it is the only place where the reader can find this route, which, till now, has never been published.

The next day our travellers entered the kingdom of Bizamo, inhabited by Pagan Galla. These people came in crowds with arms in their hands, insisting upon being paid for liberty of passing through their country; but, seeing the company of the ambassador take to their arms likewise, they compounded for a few bricks of salt and coarse cotton cloaths, and thereupon suffered them to pass. The same day, the guide sent from Narea to conduct them by crooked and unfrequented paths out of the way of the Pagan Galla, made them to enter into a large thicket through which they could scarcely force themselves; after which they came to a river called *Maleg*, when it was nearly night. Next day they could find no ford where they could pass. They now entertained a suspicion, that the guard from Narea had betrayed them, and intended to leave them in these woods to meet their death from the Galla.

The day after, they found the ford, and passed it without difficulty; and, being on the other side, they began to be a little more composed, as being far from the Pagans, and now near entering the territory of Narea. After ascending a high mountain, they came to Gonea, where they found a garrison under one of the principal officers of that kingdom, who received them with great marks of honour and joy, on account of the warm recommendation

mendation Sela Christos had given them, and perhaps as much for a considerable present they had brought along with them.

Narea, the southmost province of the Abyssinian empire, is still governed by its native princes, who are called *the Beneros*; its territory reached formerly to Bizamo.

The Galla have quite surrounded them, especially on the south-east and north. What is to the west is a part of Africa, the most unknown. The people of Narea have a small trade with Melinda on the Indian Ocean, and with Angola on the western, by means of intermediate nations. Narea is abundantly supplied with gold from the Negro country that is nearest them. Some have, indeed, said there is gold in Narea; but, after a very diligent investigation, I find it comes chiefly from towards the Atlantic.

The kingdom of Narea stands like a fortified place in the middle of a plain. Many rivers, rising in the fourth and fifth degrees of latitude, spread themselves, for want of level, over this flat country and stagnate in very extensive marshes from south by east, to the point of north, or north-west.

The foot of the mountains, or edge of these marshes nearest Narea, is thick overgrown with coffee-trees, which, if not the *only* is the *largest* tree known there. Then comes the mountainous country of Narea Proper, which is interspersed with small, unwholesome, but very fertile valleys. Immediately adjoining is the more mountainous country of Caffa, without any level ground whatever.

It is said to be governed by a separate prince: they were converted to Christianity in the time of Melec Segued, some time after the conversion of Narez. The Galla, having settled themselves in all the flat ground to the very edge of the marshes, have, in great measure, cut off the communication with Abyssinia for many years together; so that their continuance in the Christian faith seems very precarious and uncertain, for want of books and priests to instruct them.

The Nareans of the high country are the lightest in colour of any people in Abyssinia; but those that live by the borders of the marshes below are perfect blacks, and have the features and wool of Negroes: whereas all those in the high country of Narea, and still more so in the stupendous mountains of Caffa, are not so dark as Neapolitans or Sicilians. Indeed it is said that snow has been seen to lie on the mountains of Caffa, as also in that high ridge called Dyre and Tegla; but this I do not believe. Hail has probably been seen to lie there; but I doubt much whether this can be said of a substance of so loose a texture as snow.

There is great abundance both of cattle, grain, and all sorts of provisions in Narea, as well in the high as in the low country. Gold, which they sell by weight, is the medium of commerce within the country itself; but coarse cotton cloths, sibi-um, beads, and incense, are the articles with which their foreign trade to Angola; and the kingdoms on the Atlantic, is carried on.

The Nareans are exceedingly brave. Though they have been conquered, and driven out of the

low country, it has been by multitudes—nation after nation pouring in upon them with a number of horse to which they are perfect strangers: But now, confined to the mountains, and surrounded by their marshes and woods, they despise all further attempts of the Galla, and drive them from their frontiers whenever they approach too near.

In these skirmishes, or in small robbing parties, those Nareans are taken, whom the Mahometan merchants sell at Gondar. At Constantinople, India, or Cairo, the women are more esteemed as slaves than those of any other part of the world, and the men are reckoned faithful, active, and intelligent. Both sexes are remarkable for a cheerful, kind disposition, and, if properly treated, soon attach themselves inviolably to their masters. The language of Narea and Cassa is peculiar to that country, and is not a dialect of any neighbouring nation.

Antonio Fernandes in this journey, seeking to go to India by Melinda in company with Fecur Egzie ambassador, passed through this country; but none of the jesuits ever went to Narea with a view of converting the people, at which I have been often surpris'd. There was enough of gold and ignorance to have allured them. That softness and simplicity of manners for which the Nareans are remarkable, their affection for their masters and superiors, and firm attachment to them, would have been great advantages in the hands of the fathers. Every Abyssinian would have encouraged them at the beginning of this mission; and, if once they had firmly established themselves in a country

of so difficult access, they might have bid defiance to prince Facilidas, and the persecution that destroyed the progress of the Catholic faith in that reign.

From Gonea, in six days they came to the residence of Benero, the sovereign of the country; since the conquest and conversion under Melec Segued, he is called Shum. The ambassador and Fernandes were received by the Benero with an air of constraint and coolness, though with civility. They found afterwards the cause of this was the insinuation of a schismatic Abyssinian monk, then at the court of that prince, who had told him that the errand of the ambassador and missionary to India was to bring Portuguese troops that way into Abyssinia, which would end in the destruction of Narea, if it did not begin with it.

Terrified at a danger so near, the Benero called a council, in which it was resolved that the ambassador should be turned from the direct road into the kingdom of Bali, to a much more inconvenient, longer, and dangerous one; and, the ambassador hesitating a little when this was proposed, the Benero told him plainly, that he would not suffer him to pass further by any other way than that of Bali.

Bali was once a province belonging to Abyssinia, and was the first taken from them by the Galla. It is to the north-east of Narea, to the west of the kingdom of Adel, which separates it from the sea; of which ample mention has been already made in the beginning of this history.

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This was to turn them to Cape Gardéfán, the longest journey they could possibly make by land, and in the middle of their enemies ; whereas the direction of the coast of the Indian Ocean running greatly to the westward, and towards Melinda, was the shortest journey they could make by land. Melinda, too, had many rich merchants, who, though Moors, did yet traffic in the Portuguese settlements on the coast of Malabar, and had little intelligence or concern with the religious disputes which raged in Abyssinia.

However, I very much doubt whether this nearest route could be accomplished, at least by travellers, such as Fecur Egzie, Fernandes, and their companions, all ignorant of the language, and, therefore, constantly at the discretion of interpreters, and the malice or private views of different people through whose hands they must have passed.

The Benero, having thus provided against the dangers with which his state was threatened, if our travellers went by Melinda, made them a present of fifty crusades of gold for the necessaries of their journey ; and, as their way lay through the small state of Gingiro, and an ambassador from the sovereign of that state was then at Narea, he dispatched that minister in great haste, recommending the Portuguese to his protection so long as they should be in his territory.

Fecur Egzie and his company set out with the ambassador of Gingiro in a direction due east ; and the first day they arrived at a post of Narea, where was the officer who was to give them a guard to the frontiers ; and who, after some delay, in order

to see what he could extort from them, at last gave them a party of eighty soldiers to conduct them to the frontiers.

After four long days journey through countries totally laid waste by the Galla, keeping scouts constantly before them to give advice of the first appearance of any enemy, that they might hide themselves in thickets and bushes; at mid-day they began to descend a very steep craggy ridge of mountains, when the ambaffador of Gingiro, now their conductor, warned them, that, before they got to the foot of the mountain, they should enter into a very thick wood to hide themselves till night, that they might not be discovered by the Galla shepherds feeding their flocks in the plain below; for only at night, when they had retired, could those plains be passed in safety.

At four o'clock in the afternoon they began to enter the wood, and were lucky in getting a violent shower of rain, which dislodged the Galla sooner than ordinary, and sent them and their cattle home to their huts. But it was, at the same time, very disagreeable to our travellers on account of its excessive coldness. Next day, in the evening, descending another very rugged chain of mountains, they came to the banks of the large river Zebee, as the Portuguese call it; but its true name is Kibbee, a name given it by the Mahometan merchants, (the only travellers in this country) from its whiteness, approaching to the colour of melted butter, which that word signifies.

The river Zebee, or Kibbee, surrounds a great part of the kingdom of Gingiro. It has been mistaken

taken for the river El Aice, which runs into Egypt in a course parallel to the Nile, but to the west of it.

Narea seems to be the highest land in the peninsula of Africa, so that here the rivers begin to run alternately towards the Cape of Good Hope and Mediterranean; but the descent at first is very small on either side. In the adjoining latitudes, that is 4° on each side of the Line, it rains perpetually, so that these rivers, though not rapid, are yet kept continually full.

This of Zebee, is universally allowed by the merchants of this country to be the head of the river Quilimancy, which passing through such a tract of land from Narea to near Melinda, must have opened a very considerable communication with the inland country.

This territory, called Zindero, or Gingiro, is a very small one. The father and Fecur Egzie rested the sixth day from their setting out from Narea. The river Zebee, by the description of Fernandes, seems to incline from its source in a greater angle than any river on the north of that partition. He says it carries more water with it than the Nile, and is infinitely more rapid, so that it would be absolutely impassable in the season of rains, were it not for large rocks which abound in its channel.

The passage was truly tremendous; trees were laid from the shore to the next immediate rock; from that rock to the next another tree was laid; then another that reached to the shore. These trees were so elastic as to bend with the weight of a single person. At a great distance below ran the
foaming

foaming current of the river, so deep an abyss that it turned the heads of those who were passing on the moveable elastic support or bridge above.

Yet upon this seeming inconvenience the existence of that country depended. The Galla that surrounded it would have over-run it in a month, but for this river, always rapid and always full, whose ordinary communication by a bridge could be destroyed in a moment; and which, though it had one ford, yet this was useless, unless passengers had assistance from both sides of the river, and consequently could never be of service to an enemy.

The terrible appearance of this tottering bridge for a time stopped the ambassador and missionary. They looked upon the passing upon these trembling beams as certainly incurring inevitable destruction. But the reflection of dangers that pressed them behind overcame these fears, and they preferred the resolution to run the risk of being drowned in the river Zebec, rather than, by staying on the other side all night, to stand the chance of being murdered by the Galla. But, after all the men only could pass the bridge, they were obliged to leave the mules on the other side till the next morning, with instruction to their people, that, upon the first appearance of the Galla, they should leave them, and make their best way over the bridge, throwing down one of the trees after them. The next morning, two peasants, subjects of Gingiro, shewed them the ford, where their beasts passed over with great difficulty and danger, but without loss.

It was necessary now to acquaint the king of Gingiro of their arrival in his kingdom, and to beg
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to be honoured with an audience. But he happened at that time to be employed in the more important business of conjuration and witchcraft, without which this sovereign does nothing.

This kingdom of Gingiro may be fixed upon as the first on this side of Africa where we meet with the strange practice of divining from the apparition of spirits, and from a direct communication with the devil: A superstition this which likewise reaches down all along the western side of this continent on the Atlantic Ocean, in the countries of Congo, Angola, and Benin. In spite of the firmest foundation in true philosophy, a traveller, who decides from the information and investigation of facts, will find it very difficult to treat these appearances as absolute fiction, or as owing to a superiority of cunning of one man in over-reaching another. For my own part, I confess I am equally at a loss to assign reasons for disbelieving the fiction on which their pretensions to some preternatural information are founded, as to account for them by the operation of ordinary causes. The king of Gingiro found eight days necessary before he could admit the ambassador and Fernandes into his presence. On the ninth, they received a permission to go to court, and they arrived there the same day.

When they came into the presence of the king he was seated in a large gallery, open before, like what we call a balcony, which had steps from below on the outside, by which he ascended and descended at pleasure. When the letter which the ambassador carried was intimated to him, he came down from the gallery to receive it, a piece of respect

pect which he shewed to the king of Abyffinia, though he was neither his subject nor vassal. He inquired much after the king's health, and stood a little by the ambassador and Fernandes, speaking by an interpreter. Afterwards he again returned to his balcony, sat down there, read his letter, and then corresponded with the ambassador by messages sent from above to them below.

It is impossible to conceive from this, or any thing that Fernandes says, whether the language of Gingiro is peculiar to that country or not. The king of Gingiro read Socinius's letter, which was either in the Tigre or Arabic language. Fernandes understood the Arabic, and Fecur Egzie the Tigre and Amharic. It is not possible, then, to know what was the language of the king of Gingiro, who read and understood Socinius's letter, but spoke to Fecur Egzie by an interpreter.

At last the king of Gingiro told them, that all contained in the king of Abyffinia's letter was, that he should use them well, give them good guard and protection while they were in his country, and further them on their journey; which he said he would execute with the greatest pleasure and punctuality.

The next day, as is usual, the ambassador and missionary carried the king's present, chints, calicoe, and other manufactures of India, things that the king esteemed most. In return to Fernandes he sent a young girl, whom the father returned, it not being customary, as he said, for a Christian priest to have girls in his company. In exchange for the girl, the good-natured king of Gingiro sent him a
 slave

slave of the other sex, and a beautiful mule. With all respect to the scruples of the father, I think it would have been fair to have kept the beautiful mule, and given the young female Gingerite to his companion in the journey, Fecur Egzie, who could have had no scruples.

Fernandes says he received the boy from the only view of saving his soul by baptism. I wonder, since Providence had thrown the girl first in his way, by what rule of charity it was he consigned her soul to perdition by returning her, as he was not certain at the time that he might not have got a mule or camel in exchange for the girl; and then, upon his own principles, he certainly was author of the perdition of that soul which Providence seemed to have conducted by an extraordinary way to the enjoyment of all the advantages of Christianity; surely the care of Neophytes of the female sex was not a new charge to the Jesuits in Abyssinia.

It seems to be ridiculous for Fernandes to imagine that the sovereign of this little state called himself Gingiro, knowing that this word signified a monkey. His enemies might give him that name; but it is not likely he would adopt it himself. And the reason of that name is still more ridiculous; for he says it is because the gallery is like a monkey's cage. If that was the case, all the princes in Congo and Angola give their audiences in such places. Indeed it seems to me that it is here the customs, used in these last-mentioned parts of Africa, begin, although Gingiro is nearer the coast of the Indian Ocean than that of the Atlantic. The colour of
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the people at Gingiro is nearly black, still it is not the black of a negro; the features are small and straight as in Europe or Abyssinia.

All matters in this state are conducted by magic; and we may see to what point the human understanding is debased in the distance of a few leagues. Let no man say that ignorance is the cause, or heat of climate, which is the unintelligible observation generally made on these occasions. For why should heat of climate addict a people to magic more than cold? or, why should ignorance enlarge a man's powers, so that, overleaping the bounds of common intelligence, it should extend his faculty of conversing with a new set of beings in another world? The Ethiopians, who nearly surround Abyssinia, are blacker than those of Gingiro, their country hotter, and are, like them, an indigenous people that have been, from the beginning, in the same part where they now inhabit. Yet the former neither adore the devil, nor pretend to have a communication with him: they have no human sacrifices, nor are there any traces of such enormities having prevailed among them. A communication with the sea has been always open, and the slave-trade prevalent from the earliest times; while the king of Gingiro, shut up in the heart of the continent, sacrifices those slaves to the devil which he has no opportunity to sell to man. For at Gingiro begins that accursed custom of making the shedding of human blood a necessary part in all solemnities. How far to the southward this reaches I do not know; but I look upon this to be the geographical bounds

bounds of the reign of the devil on the north side of the equator in the peninsula of Africa.

This kingdom is hereditary in one family, but does not descend in course to the eldest son, the election of the particular prince being not in the nobles; and thus far, indeed, it seems to resemble that of their neighbours in Abyssinia.

When the king of Gingiro dies, the body of the deceased is wrapped in a fine cloth, and a cow is killed. They then put the body so wrapped up into the cow's skin. As soon as this is over, all the princes of the royal family fly and hide themselves in the bushes; while others, intrusted with the election, enter into the thickets, beating every where about as if looking for game. At last a bird of prey, called in their country Liber, appears, and hovers over the person destined to be king, crying and making a great noise without quitting his station. By this means the person destined to be elected is found, surrounded, as is reported, by tigers, lions, panthers, and such like wild beasts. This is imagined to be done by magic, or the devil, else there are every where enough of these beasts lying in the cover to furnish materials for such a tale, without having recourse to the power of magic to assemble them.

As they find their king, then, like a wild beast, so his behaviour continues the same after he is found. He flies upon them with great rage, resisting to the last, wounding and killing all he can reach without any consideration, till, overcome by force, he is dragged to a throne, which he fills

in a manner perfectly corresponding to the rationality of the ceremonies of his instalment.

Although there are many that have a right to seek after this king, yet, when he is discovered, it does not follow, that the same person who finds him should carry him to his coronation; for there is a family who have a right to dispute this honour with the first possessor; and, therefore, in his way from the wood, they set upon the people in whose hands he is, and a battle ensues, where several are killed or wounded; and if these last, by force, can take him out of the hands of the first finder, they enjoy all the honours due to him that made him king.

Before he enters his palace two men are to be slain; one at the foot of the tree by which his house is chiefly supported; the other at the threshold of his door, which is besmeared with the blood of the victim. And, it is said, (I have heard this often in Abyssinia from people coming from that country) that the particular family, whose privilege it is to be slaughtered, so far from avoiding it, glory in the occasion, and offer themselves willingly to meet it.—To return to our travellers—

The father and the ambassador, leaving the kingdom of Gingiro, proceeded in a direction due east, and entered the kingdom of Cambat, depending still on the empire of Abyssinia, and there halted at Sangara, which seems to be the principal place of the province, governed at that time by a Moor called *Amelmal*.

On the left of Cambat are the Guragués, who live in some beggarly villages, but mostly in caves
and

and holes in the mountains. The father was detained two days at Sangara, at the persuasion of the inhabitants there, who told him there was a fair in the neighbourhood, and people would pass in numbers to accompany him, so that there would be no danger. But, after staying that time at Sangara, he found that the intention of this delay was only to give time to some horsemen of the Guragués to assemble, in order to attack the caravan on the road, which they did soon after; and, though they were repulsed, yet it was with loss of one of the company, a young man related to Socinios, who, being wounded with a poisoned arrow, died some days after.

In the mean time, an Abyffinian, called *Manquer*, overtook their caravan. As he was a schismatic, his intention was very well known to be that of disappointing their journey; and he prevailed with Amelmal so far as to make him suspect that the recommendations which the ambaffador brought were false. He, therefore, insisted on the ambaffador's staying there till he should get news from court. Amelmal, Manquer, and the ambaffador, each dispatched a messenger, who tarried three months on the road, and at last brought orders from the king to dispatch them immediately.

As Amelmal now saw the bad inclination of Manquer, he detained him at Combat that he might occasion no more difficulties in their way. He gave the ambaffador likewise seven horses, which were said to be the best presents to the princes or governors that were in his road, and dispatched

the travellers with another companion, Baharo, who had brought the letters from the king.

From Combat they entered the small territory of Alaba, independent of the king of Abyssinia, whose governor was called *Aliko*, a Moor. This man, already prejudiced against the missionary and the ambassador, was still hesitating whether to allow them to proceed, when Manquer, who fled from Amelmal, arrived. Aliko, hearing from this incendiary, that the father's errand was to bring Portuguese that way from India to destroy the Mahometan faith, as in former times, burst into such violent rage as to threaten the father, and all with him, with death, which nothing but the reality of the king's letters, of which he had got assurance from Baharo, and some regard to the law of nations, on account of the ambassador Fecur Egzie, could have prevented. In the mean time, he put them all in close prison, where several of the Portuguese died. At last, after a council held, in which Manquer gave his voice for putting them to death, a man of superior character in that country advised the sending them back to Amelmal, the way that they came; and this measure was accordingly adopted.

They returned, therefore, from Combat, and thence to Gorgora, without any sort of advantage to themselves or to us, only what arises from that opportunity of rectifying the geography of the country through which they passed: and even for this they have furnished but very scanty materials, in comparison of what we might reasonably have expected,

expected, without having occasioned any additional fatigue to themselves.

We have already said, that though Socinius had not openly declared his resolution of embracing the Catholic faith, yet he had gone so far as to declare, upon the dispute held between the Catholic and schismatic clergy, in his own presence and that of the Abuna, that the Abyssinian disputants were vanquished, and ought to have been convinced from the authority of their own books, especially that of Haimanout Abou, the faith of the ancient fathers and doctors of their church received by them from the beginning as the undoubted rule of faith: That the doctrine of the Catholic church being only what was taught in the Haimanout Abou concerning the two natures in Christ, this point was to all intents and purposes settled; and, therefore, he signified it as his will, that, for the future, no one should deny that there are two natures in Christ, distinct in themselves, but divinely united in one person, which was Christ; declaring at the same time, that in case any person should hereafter deny, or call this in doubt, he would chastise him for seven years.

The Abuna, on the contrary, supported by the half-brother of the king, Emana Christos, (brother to Ras Sela Christos) published a sentence of excommunication, by affixing it to the door of one of the churches belonging to the palace, in which he declared all persons accursed who should maintain two natures in Christ, or embrace or vindicate any of the errors of the church of Rome.

The king had received various complaints of the Agows, who had abused his officers, and refused payment of tribute. He had set out upon an expedition against them, intending to winter in that country; but, hearing of the rash conduct of the Abuna, and the leagues that were in consequence every where forming against him, he returned to Gorgora, and sent to the Abuna, that unless, without delay, he recalled the excommunication he had published, he should be forthwith punished with loss of his head. This language was too clear and explicit to admit a doubt of its meaning; and the Abuna, giving way for the time, recalled his excommunication.

A conspiracy was next formed by Emana Christos, the eunuch Keffa Wahad master of the household to the king, and Julius governor of Tigre, to murder Socinius in his palace; for which purpose they desired an audience upon weighty affairs, which being granted by the king, the three conspirators were admitted into his presence.

It was concerted that Julius should present a petition of such a nature as probably to produce a refusal; and, in the time of the altercation that would ensue, when the king might be off his guard, the other two were to stab him.

Just before the conversation began, he was advised of his danger by a page, and Julius presenting his petition, the king granted it immediately, before Emana Christos could come up to assist in the dispute which they expected; and this conspirator appearing in the instant, the king, who had got up to walk, invited them all three up to the terrace.

terrace. This was the most favourable opportunity they could have wished. They, therefore, deferred assaulting him till they should have got up the terrace: The king entered the door of the private stair, and drew it hastily after him. It had a spring-lock made by Peter Paez, which was fixed in the inside, and could not be opened from without, so that the king was left secure upon the terrace. Upon this the conspirators, fearing themselves discovered, retired, and from that time resolved to keep out of the king's power.

At that period, Socinius had determined upon an expedition against the Funge, that is, against the blacks of Sennaar, who had entered his country in a violent manner, destroying his people, and carrying them off as slaves. It was, therefore, concerted, that while the king was busied far off with the Funge, Emana Christos, Julius, and the eunuch Kessa, at once should attack Sela Christos, at whom, next to the king, the conspirators chiefly aimed; and the cause was, that the king had taken the posts of Ras and the government of Gojam from Emana Christos, who was a schismatic, and had given them to his younger brother, Sela Christos, a violent Catholic.

Julius began by a proclamation in Woggora, in which he commanded, that those who believed two natures in Christ should immediately leave the province, and that all those who were friends to the Alexandrian faith should forthwith repair to him, and fight in defence of it. He then ordered the goods of all the Catholics in Tigre to be confiscated, and straightway marched to surprize Sela Christos

Christos then in Gojam. But the king received intelligence of his designs, and returned into Dembea before it was well known that he had left it. This, at first, very much disconcerted Julius; and the rather, that Emana Christos and Keffa Wahad kept aloof, nor had they declared themselves openly yet, nor did they seem inclined to do it till Julius had first tried his fortune with the king.

This rebel, now full of presumption, advanced with his army to where the Nile issues out of the great lake Tzana; and there he found the Abuna Simon, who had staid for some weeks in one of the islands upon pretence of devotion. Simon, after having confirmed Julius in his resolution of murdering the king, his father-in-law, or of dying in defence of the Alexandrian faith, if necessary, persuaded him to lay aside his design of marching against Sela Christos, but rather immediately to return back and surprize the king before these two joined.

Julius readily adopted this advice of the Abuna; while that priest, to shew he was sincere, offered to accompany him in person, and share his fortune. This was accepted with pleasure by Julius, who next morning received the Abuna's benediction at the head of his army, and assisted at a solemn excommunication pronounced against the king, Sela Christos, the fathers, and all the Catholics at court.

The king's first thought, upon hearing these proceedings, was to send some troops to the assistance of Sela Christos, warning him of his danger; but, upon hearing measures were changed, and that the
first

first design was against himself, he marched to meet Julius, and sent a message to Sela Christos to join him with all possible speed; and, as he was an excellent general he took his post so judiciously that he could not be forced to fight against his will till succour was brought him, without great disadvantage to the enemy.

Julius, fearing the junction of Sela Christos, endeavoured to fight the two armies separately. For which purpose he advanced and pitched his camp close within sight of that of Socinios, resolving to force him to an engagement. This was thought a very dangerous measure, and was contrary to the advice of all his friends, who saw how judiciously Socinios had chosen his ground; and it was known to the meanest soldier on both sides, how consummate the king was in the art of war.

But the Abuna having persuaded him, that, as soon as the soldiers should see him, they would abandon the king and join his colours, early in the morning he put on his coat of mail, and, mounted on a strong and fiery horse, was proceeding to the king's camp, when Malacotawit, his wife, (daughter to Socinios) persuaded him at least to take some food to enable him to bear the fatigues of the day. But disdainng such advice, he only answered furiously, "That he had sworn not to taste meat till he had brought her her father's head;" and, without longer waiting for the rest of his troops, he leaped over the enemy's lines in a quarter where the Abuna had promised he should be well received.

Indeed, on his first appearance, no one there opposed his passage, but seemed rather inclined to fa-

your him as the Abuna had promised : And he had now advanced near to a body of Tigre soldiers that were the guard of the king's tent, loudly crying, " Where is your emperor?" when one of these with a stone struck him so rudely upon the forehead that it felled him to the ground ; and, being now known, another foldier (called Amda) thrust him through with a sword, and thereafter killed him with many wounds. His head was cut off and carried to Socinios.

The few that attended him perished likewise among the soldiers. Nor did any of Julius's army think of a battle, but all fought their safety by a flight. The king's troops being all fresh, pursued the scattered rebels with great vigour, and many were slain, without any loss on the part of the royalists.

The Abuna Simon had, for a considerable time, stood as an ecclesiastic, unhurt and unheeded, among the flying troops. Being at last distinguished by his violent vociferation, and repeated imprecations upon the king and the conquerors, he was slain by a common soldier, who cut his head off and carried it to Socinios, who ordered it, with the body, to be taken from the field of battle and buried in a church-yard.

Socinios gave the spoil of the camp to his soldiers. It was said, that no time, since the Turks were defeated under Mahomet Gagne, was there ever so much treasure found in a camp. The pride of Julius induced him to carry all his riches with him. They were the fruits of avarice and oppression in all the principal posts of the empire, and which in their turn he had enjoyed. They were likewise the spoils

spoils of the Catholics, newly acquired by the confiscations made since his rebellion. A great number of cattle was likewise taken, which the king distributed among the priests of the several churches, the judges, and other lay-officers. Very great rejoicings were made everywhere, in the midst of which arrived Ras Sela Christos with his army from Gojam, and was struck with astonishment on seeing the small number of troops with which the king had been exposed to fight Julius, and how complete a victory he had gained with them.

In the mean time, Emana Christos had retired to a high mountain in Gojam, called *Melca Amba*, where he continued to excite the people of that province to rebel and join Julius, whose arrival he daily expected, that, together, they might fight Sela Christos. But the rashness of Julius, and the march of Sela Christos to the king's assistance, had very much disconcerted their whole scheme.

As Christos, who commanded in Gojam after the departure of Ras Sela Christos, sent to Melca Amba, reproaching Emana Christos with seditious practices; upbraiding him with the unnatural part he had acted, being a brother-german to Sela Christos, and brother to Socinios by the same mother, while Julius was married to his daughter, and had constantly enjoyed the great places of the empire. He asked him, What they could be more? Kings they could not be, neither he nor Julius. Ras, the next place in the empire, they both had enjoyed; and, if the king had taken that office lately from Emana Christos, he had not given it to a stranger, but to his brother Sela Christos, who, it was but fair, should have his turn; and that the importance of
his

his family was not the less increased by it. Lastly, he represented the danger he ran, if Julius made his peace, of falling a sacrifice as the adviser of rebellion."

Emana Christos answered, " That though he rebelled with Julius, and at the same time, yet it was not as a follower of Julius, nor against the king; but that he took up arms in defence of the ancient faith of his country, which was now, without reason, trodden under foot in favour of a religion, which was a false one if they understood it, and an useless one if they did not. He said he was satisfied of his own danger; but neither his connection with the king, nor his being related to Sela Christos, could weigh with him against his duty to God and his country. The king and his brother might be right in embracing the Romish religion, because they were convinced of the truth of it: he had used, however, the same means, and the same application, had heard the arguments of the same fathers, which, unluckily for him, had convinced him their religion was not a true, but a false one. For the same reasons he continued to be an Alexandrian, which his brother alleged had made him a Roman. He, therefore, begged Af Christos to consider, by a review of things since David III.'s time, how much blood the change would cost to the kingdom by the attempt, whether it succeeded or not; and whether, after that consideration, it was worth trying the experiment."

This artful and sensible message, sent by a man of the capacity and experience of Emanu Christos, easily convinced Af Christos that it was not by argument

gument Emana Christos was to be brought to his duty; but, like a good officer, he kept up correspondence with him, that he might be master of the intelligence to what place he retired.

Soon after Sela Christos had left Gojam to join the king, by forced marches he surrounded Melca Amba, where Emana Christos was, and had assembled a number of troops to descend into the plain and create a diversion in favour of Julius. The mountain had neither water in it nor food for such a number of men, nor had Emana Christos forces enough to risk a battle with an officer of the known experience of Af Christos, who had chosen the ground at his full leisure, and with complete knowledge.

Three days the army within the mountain held out without complaining; but, in the evening of the third day, some monks and hermits (*holy men*, the abettors of this rebellion) came to Af Christos to remonstrate, that there were several convents and villages in the mountain, also small springs, and barley enough to answer the necessities of the ordinary inhabitants, but were not enough for such an additional number which had taken forcible possession of the wells, and drank up all the water, to the immediate danger of the whole inhabitants perishing with thirst.

To this Af Christos answered, That the reducing the mountain, and the taking Emana Christos, was what was given him in commission by the king, to attain which end he would carefully improve all the means in his power. He was sorry, indeed, for the distress of the convents in the mountain, but
could

could not help it; nor would he suffer one of them to remove or come down into the plain, nor would he discontinue blockading the mountain while Emana Christos was there and alive. No other alternative, therefore, remained but the delivering up Emana Christos. His army would have fought for him against a common enemy, but against thirst their shields and swords were useless.

As Christos, with his prisoner, forthwith proceeded to join the king, and passed the Nile into Begemder. At crossing the river Bashilo, they were informed of the defeat and death of Julius and the Abuna. The messenger had also letters for Emana Christos, whom the king did not know to be yet prisoner: among these was one from Sela Christos, in which he upbraided his brother with his unnatural treason, and assured him speedily of a fate like that of Julius. Emana Christos received this intelligence almost dead with fear, for never was a prophecy made which seemed to have needed less time to accomplish than this of his brother's.

As Christos surrendered his prisoner to the king at Dancaz, who immediately assembled a full convocation of judges of all degrees; and the prisoner being ordered to answer to his charge concerning the rebellion of Julius and his conspiracy against the king's life, he took the part he had been advised, and palliated the whole of his actions, without positively denying any one of them, and submitted to the king's mercy. The judges, considering the defence, unanimously found him guilty of death, but the king, whose last vote, when sitting in judgment,

ment, supercedes and overturns all the rest, re-
prieved, and sent him prisoner to Amhara.

Hitherto the king had contented himself with fixing two points in favour of the Roman church, in contradistinction to that of Alexandria. The first denounced punishment to every one who did not believe that there are two natures in Christ, and that he is perfect God and perfect man, without confusion of persons. The second was rather a point of discipline than of faith; yet it was urged as such, by declaring it to be unlawful to observe Saturday, the ancient Jewish sabbath. The first of these, if it was not the cause, had been assumed as the pretext for the rebellion of Julius. The second produced that of Jonael governor of Begemder, of which we are now to speak. But thus far only the king had gone. He had not openly joined the church of Rome, nor as yet renounced that of Alexandria, nor forced any one else to do so.

The first prelude to Jonael's rebellion was an anonymous letter written to the king, in which all the stale and lame arguments of the Alexandrians were raked together, and stated with a degree of presumption worthy of the ignorance and obstinacy of those from whom they came. This, though ridiculous, and below notice in point of argument, offended greatly both the king and the Jesuits, by the asperity of its terms, and the personal applications contained in it. The king was treated as another Dioclesian, thirsting after Christian blood, and for this devoted to hell; as were also the Jesuits, whom they called relations of Pilate, in allusion to their origin from Rome.

The king, grievously offended, added this injunction to the former proclamation, "That all outdoor work, such as plowing and sowing, should be publicly followed by the husbandman on the Saturday, under penalty of paying a web of cotton cloth, for the first omission, which cloth was to be of five shillings value; and the second offence was to be punished by a confiscation of moveables, and the crime not to be pardoned for seven years;" —the greatest punishment for misdemeanors in Abyssinia. To this Socinius added, *viva voce*, from his throne, "that he never *abolished*, but *explained* and established their religion, which always taught, as their own books could testify, that Christ was perfect God and perfect man, two distinct natures united in one hypostasis of the eternal word; neither was it in compliance with the Jesuits that he abrogated the observation of the Jewish sabbath, but in obedience to the council of Chalcedon, which was founded in the holy scriptures, for which he was ready at all times to lose his life, though he should endeavour first to inflict that punishment on such as were its enemies."

In order to shew that he did not mean to trifle, he ordered the tongue of a monk (called Abba Af Christos) to be cut out, for denying the two natures in Christ; and Bucu, one of the principal generals of his court (who afterwards died a zealous Catholic) he ordered to be beaten with rods, and degraded from his employment, for observing the Jewish sabbath.

The king, having given these public, unequivocal testimonies of his resolution, put himself at the
head

head of his army, and marched against Jonael; but that rebel, not daring to meet his offended sovereign, retired into the mountains; whereupon the king laid waste the country of the Galla, who had protected him. This occasioned a division among the Galla themselves. One party declaring for the king, apprehended Jonael with intention to deliver him up; but he was soon rescued out of their hands by the contrary party, enemies to Socinios. His protectors being once known, the manner of working his destruction was soon known likewise. The king's presents made their way to that faithless people, the only barbarians with whom the right of hospitality is not established. Upon receiving the king's bribe, they murdered Jonael, cut his head off, and sent it to the king.

The rebellion in Damot was not so easily quelled. Sela Christos, a zealous Catholic, was sent against the rebels to enforce the proclamation with regard to the sabbath. But as his connections were very considerable among them, he chose first to endeavour, by fair means, to induce the ignorant savages to return to reason and obedience. With this view, he sent to expostulate with them; and to beg that, in articles of faith, they would suffer themselves to be examined and instructed by men of learning and good life; not by those monks, ignorant like themselves, from whom they only could learn vice, blasphemy, and rebellion. To this the Damots answered, as one man, That, if his friendship for them and good intentions were real, he should give them, for proof, the immediate burning of all the Latin books which had been translated into the

Ethiopian language, and that, then he should hang those Jesuits who were with him upon a high tree.

We are not, however, to consider this was really from a conviction or persuasion of the Damots, who inhabit a province bordering upon the Agows and Gongas, and their christianity much upon a par with that of either of these nations. But the fact was, that the fanatics and zealots for the Alexandrian faith had retired in great numbers to Damot, as to a province the worst affected to the king, from the recent violence of Julius, who, in an expedition against the Shangalla, by order of the king had driven off the cattle of the peaceable Damots, who had been then guilty of no offence. And as these were ready to rebel for a quarrel merely their own, it was very easy for the schismatical monks to add this religious grievance to the sum of the preceding.

Sela Christos had with him about 7000 men, most of them Catholics and veteran soldiers; and among these 40 Portuguese, partly on foot, armed with musquets, the others on horseback, clad in coats of mail. Very different was the army of Damots. They were superior in number, for they exceeded 12000 men, and among these were 400 monks, well armed with swords, lances, and shields, earnestly bent upon the obtaining a crown of martyrdom in defence of their religion, from the innovation proposed by Socinios. At the head of these was a fanatical monk (one Batacu) who promised them armies of angels, with flaming swords, who should slay their enemies, but render them invulnerable,

nerable, as he declared himself to be, either by sword or lance.

The battle was fought at the foot of the mountains of Amid Amid, on the 6th of October 1620, Sela Christos, sure of victory, and unwilling to slaughter a people he had been used to protect, began first to shew his superiority in slight skirmishes. After which, desiring a parley, he sent messengers to them, begging them to consider their own danger, and offering them a general amnesty upon their submission. These messengers were not allowed to approach, for the showers of arrows that were poured upon them; so the battle began with great animosity on both sides. The Damots were soon broken and put to flight by the superiority of Sela Christos's soldiers. But the 400 monks, already mentioned, fought most desperately in defiance of numbers, nor did they seek their safety by a flight. One hundred and eighty of them were killed on the place they occupied, valiantly fighting to the very last. A rare example, and seldom found in history, that fanatics like these, always ready to rebel, should persist and sacrifice their lives to the follies of their own preaching.

As for their celestial auxiliaries, whose assistance they were promised as far as could be discovered, they neither did harm nor good. We may suppose they stood neuter. But Batacu the hermit, ring-leader of this sedition, whose body was so miraculously armed, that neither sword nor spear could make any impression upon it, was unfortunately thrust through with a lance in the very beginning

of the engagement, which greatly served to discredit these supernatural aids.

It was in this year 1620, that Socinios marched into Begemder against Jonael. At which time Peter Paez was employed at Gorgora in building the church there. The king returned immediately to Dancaz after the defeat of Jonael, and passed his winter at that place.

It was on the 16th of January 1621, that the dedication of the church of Gorgora was made by Peter Paez; and at that time the king was in Begemder. Upon his return to Dancaz he met Paez at Gorgora for the first time. He remained at Gorgora till the 3d of October of that year, when the news of the defeat of the Damots by Sela Christos arrived, which he received in presence of that priest at Gorgora. In this, both the Jesuits and Abyssinian annals agree. It is not then possible that Peter Paez could have been with the king at Sacala, or Geesh, in the country of the Agows on the 21st of March 1621*; for both Peter Paez and Socinios were at that time in Gorgora.

At this time the Ethiopic memoirs of Socinios's reign interrupted their continual topics of rebellion and bloodshed, to record a very trifling anecdote; which, however, I insert, as it serves to give some idea of the simplicity and ignorance of those times.

The historian says, that this year there was brought into Abyssinia, a bird called *Para*, which was about the bigness of a hen, and spoke all languages; Indian, Portuguese, and Arabic. It named
the

* This will be more enlarged upon hereafter.

the king's name : although its voice was that of a man, it could likewise neigh like a horse, and mew like a cat, but did not sing like a bird. It was produced before the assembly of judges, of the priests, and the azages of court, and there it spoke with great gravity. The assembly, after considering circumstances well, were unanimously of opinion, that the evil spirit had no part in endowing it with these talents. But to be certain of this, it was thought most prudent to take the advice of Ras Sela Christos, then in Gojam, who might, if he thought fit, consult the superior of Mahebar Selassé ; to them it was sent, but it died on the road. The historian closes his narrative by this wise reflection on the parrot's death ; " Such is the lot of all flesh."

The king, immediately after his victory over Jonael, had resolved to throw off the mask, and openly to profess the Catholic religion. The success of Sela Christos against the Damots had confirmed him. He had passed the rainy season, as I have before observed, between Gorgora and Dancaz ; and, in the usual time, in the month of November, marched to Foggora, a narrow stripe of plain country, reaching from Emfras to Dara, bounded on one side by the lake Dembea, and on the other by the mountains of Begemder.

For this purpose he sent to Peter Pæz, his ordinary confessor, to come to him ; and, having told him his resolution, he declared, that, in proof of the sincerity of his conversion, he had put away all his wives (of whom he had several of the first quality, and many children by them) and retained only

only his first, by whom he had the eldest of his sons, destined to succeed him in the empire.

Paez, having received his confession, and public renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, returned to Gorgora singing his *nunc dimittis*, as if the great end of his mission was now completed; nor was he deceived in his prognostication. For, having too much heated himself with zeal in travelling, he was, upon his arrival, taken with a violent fever; and, tho' every sort of remedy was administered to him by Antonio Fernandes, yet he died on the third of May 1623, with great demonstrations of piety and resignation, and firm conviction, that he had done his duty in an active, innocent, and well-spent life.

He had been seven years a captive in Arabia in the hands of the Moors, and nineteen years missionary in Abyssinia, in the worst of times, and had always extricated himself from the most perilous situations, with honour to himself and advantage to his religion. In person, he was very tall and strong; but lean from continual labour and abstinence. He was red faced; which, Tellez says, proceeded from the religious *warmth* of his heart. He had a very good understanding, which he had cultivated, every hour of his life, by study or practice.

Besides possessing universal knowledge in scholastic divinity, and the books belonging to his profession, he understood Greek, Latin, and Arabic well, was a good mathematician, an excellent mechanic, wrought always with his own hands, and in building was at once a careful, active labourer,

er, and an architect of refined taste and judgment. He was, by his own study and industry, painter, mason, carver, carpenter, smith, farrier, quarrier, and was able to build convents and palaces, and furnish them without calling one workman to his assistance; and in this manner he is said to have furnished the convent at Collela, as also the palace and convent at Gorgora.

With all these accomplishments, he was so affable, compassionate, and humble in his nature, that he never had opportunity of conversing, even with heretics, without leaving them his friends. He was remarkably cheerful in his temper; and the most forward always in promoting innocent mirth, of that puerile species which we in England call *fun*, in great request among the young men in Abyssinia, who spend much of their time in this sort of conversation, whether in the city or the camp. Above all, he was a patient, diligent instructor of youth; and the greatest part of his disciples died in the persecution that soon followed, resolutely maintaining the truths of that religion their preceptor first had taught them. In a word, he was the hinge upon which the Catholic religion turned. He had found the seeds of it sown in the country for a hundred years before his time, which had borne little fruit, and was then apparently on the decline. Nineteen years of this most active missionary, and the death of three kings, had advanced it only so far as to be embraced publicly by one of them; after Paez's death, in six years it fell, though supported most strenuously by a king prodigal of the blood of his subjects in this cause, by a patriarch sent

sent from Rome, and by above 20 very zealous and active missionaries; and, as far as my foresight can carry me, it is so entirely fallen, that, unless by a special miracle of Providence wrought for that purpose, it never will rise again.

The king's renunciation of the Alexandrian faith was followed by a very strong, or rather violent manifesto, and we need not be at a loss to guess whom he employed to draw it up. It begins by asserting the supremacy of the church of Rome, as the see of St. Peter; it mentions the three first general councils, which condemned Arius, Macedonius, and Nestorius; next quotes the council of Chalcedon, as the fourth general council, as having justly condemned Dioscurus; but says not a word of the council of Ephesus, which the Abyssinians receive instead of that of Chalcedon; insists largely upon the two natures in Christ; then, leaving the patriarchs of Alexandria, it attacks not the doctrine, but the morals of the Abunas, sent from Alexandria into Abyssinia, accuses the ecclesiastics in general of simony and paying money to the Abuna for their ordination, (a well-founded part of the charge) which I fear continues to this day.

The Abuna Marcus was, it is there said, convicted by Socinios, or Melec Segued, of a crime of such turpitude that the name of it should never stain paper. He was degraded and banished to the island of Dek. His successor Christodulus had many concubines. Abuna Petros, who succeeded, took the wife of a poor Egyptian, and lived with her; he then excommunicated his sovereign Jacob, after he had reigned seven years, and died in battle

ple in the actual commission of treason, fighting against the prince.

Simon, the last Abuna, besides living in adultery with the wife of an Egyptian called Matti, kept several young women with him as concubines; and being detected in having a daughter by one of them, with a view to conceal it, he caused the child to be exposed to be devoured by the hyæna. After living in constant disobedience to God's law, he joined the crime of rebellion to the repeated breach of every command in the decalogue; and appearing in battle, and excommunicating his sovereign, God (says the manifesto) delivered him into our victorious hands, and he was slain by a common soldier in the very commission of his crime.

It must be owned, we cannot have a worse picture of any Christian church than that here given of the bishop's church of Alexandria. Charity should induce us to hope some exaggeration had crept into it. Yet when we consider that the facts mentioned were all within the space of forty years, and consequently must have been within the knowledge, not only of Socinius, but of many people then alive and at court, we cannot, with the impartiality of an historian, deny our apprehensions, that these charges were but too-well founded.

However this may be, neither the king's example, nor his manifesto, had the effect he desired. A rebel, whom the annals call the son of Gabriel, declared himself against the king in Amhara, just at the time that Socinius, misled by the enemies of Sela Christos, had begun to entertain suspicion of his loyalty, and had deprived him of the govern-

ment of Gojam and the Agows. Finding, after an examination, there was no person that was qualified to bring this affair to a happy issue but Sela Christos, he replaced him in his government of Gojam, giving him, at the same time, orders to march against the son of Gabriel into Amhara.

This command of the king, Ras Sela Christos soon complied with, and, upon his first appearance in that province, the rebel retired to a high mountain which he made his place of arms, the top producing both provisions and water sufficient to maintain a large garrison.

The Ras, seeing that force availed nothing, had recourse to the usual trap these rebels fall into. Weary of confinement on the mountain, sensible that he was by himself too weak to leave it, while such an enemy expected him below, he accepted the friendship of the neighbouring Galla, who offered to join him in such numbers as to enable him to descend from the mountain, and try his fortune in a battle. The treaty was concluded, and the junction no sooner effected, than the faithless Galla, before gained by the Ras, fell upon the son of Gabriel with their clubs, and killed him on the spot, having so mangled his body that scarce a piece was reserved to send to his enemy.

The joy this victory occasioned at court met with a great addition by the arrival of the Romish patriarch. It has been before observed, that the king had himself wrote letters to the pope and king of Spain, declaring his intentions to turn Catholic. Peter Paez, Antonio Fernandes, and the other priests, had given a much more favourable prospect of religious affairs than had as yet been conveyed to

Rome; the wiser part of the conclave, however, had doubted. But now, the king had voluntarily made his recantation, it was no longer thought time for delay, and accordingly Alphonso Mendez, a Jesuit doctor of divinity, a man of great learning, by birth a Portugese, was ordained at Lisbon the 25th of May 1624.

From thence he proceeded to India by the way of Goa, attended by several fresh missionaries; and finding there letters from Socinios, and a passport from the king of Dancali, a Mahometan prince in alliance with the Abyssinians, he arrived at Bilur, an open bay in the small and barren state of Dancali, on the second of May 1625, and was received, by the brother of the reigning prince, with every token of friendship that so poor a state and sovereign could afford; the king of Dancali himself was at the distance of six days journey, in a place where there was greater plenty of water and provisions. The following day the king sent four mules for the fathers to join him, and received them in a room of a round figure, surrounded and covered with bundles of straw, but so low they scarce could raise themselves after having made their bows.

In this miserable kingdom, which I shall not describe, as since that period, it has been conquered by the Galla, the patriarch and fathers staid almost in want of necessaries for sixteen days. At last they set out, having, with much difficulty, mustered sufficient beasts of burden to carry their baggage. The road lay through part of the country wherein are the mines of the fossile-salt, hot, barren, and absolutely without water, and exposed
greatly

greatly to the incursions of the Galla. After two days journey, they arrived in the morning of the third, at the foot of Senaffé, where there was water. It is the frontier (as the name imports) of the province of Enderta, now united to the government of Tigré. It is part of that ridge of mountains which separates the seasons, occasioning summer on the one side, while rain and cold prevail on the other.

On the night before they came to the mountain, while dubious of their way, a star of more than ordinary magnitude, and of surprizing brightness, appeared over the patriarch, giving so strong a light that it illuminated the heavens down to the horizon. It was not, in its place or manner of appearing, like a common star, but stood stationary, in the way leading to Senaffé, for above six minutes, and disappeared*. This star, the patriarch and his followers modestly say, was probably the same that conducted the Magi to the cradle of Christ, and was now sent to shew them the way into Abyssinia.

While they were at the foot of this mountain, the Muleteers, all Mahometans, thought the occasion a proper one to plunder them, by obliging them to pay an additional hire for their beasts, which they pretended were not able to ascend so steep a mountain. The camels certainly could not pass; but mules and asses have a more practicable road, for the sake of carrying the salt. They insisted to leave the company till they should bring them fresh mules. The carravan consisted of the patriarch and six ecclesiastics, priests, and friars, and thirteen,

* Tellez, lib. iv. cap. 38.

teen laymen, three of whom were musicians. It was very probably their intention to have sent to them people who would very soon have put a fatal period to the mission, had not Emanuel Baradas, with a number of Abyssinians, and officers, and plenty of all things necessary, joined the patriarch on the 16th of June 1625; while their late conductors, conscious of misbehaviour, fled without seeking their hire.

In five days they came to Fremona, where they staid till November; and, in December, arrived at Gorgora, where they were introduced to the king in his palace. Socinius ordered the patriarch to be placed on a seat equal in height to his own, on his right hand; and at that very audience, which was on the 11th of February 1626, it was settled that the king should take an oath of submission to the see of Rome.

This useless, vain, ridiculous ceremony, was accordingly celebrated on the 11th of February, with all the pageantry of a heathen festival or triumph. The palace was adorned with all the pomp and vanity that the church of Rome, and especially that part of it, the Order of the Jesuits, had solemnly abjured. The patriarch, as a mark of his superiority over the Abunas, preached a sermon in the Portuguese language upon the paimacy of the chair of St. Peter, full of Latin quotations, which is said to have had a wonderful effect upon the king and Sela Christos, neither of whom understood one word either of Latin or Portuguese.

That part of the patriarch's discourse, which was applicable to Socinius's conversion, was answered

swered by Melca Christos, governor of Samen, (himself a schismatic) in the language of Ambara, which neither the patriarch nor his retinue understood, and concluded with these words, "That as the king thought himself obliged to fulfil those promises of submitting himself to the see of Rome which his predecessors had made, the time was now come in which he should do that, if such was his pleasure." These last words of the orator seem not to have satisfied the zeal of Socinius. He interrupted Melca Christos by saying, "that it was not now, but a long time since, that he had submitted to the church of Rome, as true successor of St. Peter; and the present occasion was only a confirmation of what he had formerly professed."

The patriarch answered by a few words, prudently and sensibly, I suppose to save time, seeing that, short or long, his discourse would not be understood. But proceeding to facts, he opened a new testament, while Socinius, upon his knees, took the following oath: "We, sultan Segued, emperor of Ethiopia, do believe and confess that St. Peter, prince of the apostles, was constituted, by Christ our Lord, head of the whole Christian church, and that he gave him the principality and dominion over the whole world, by saying to him, *You are Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* And again when he said, *Keep my sheep.* Also we believe and confess, that the pope of Rome, lawfully elected, is the true successor of St. Peter the apostle, in government; that he holdeth the same power, dignity, and primacy, in the whole
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Christian church: and to the holy father Urban VIII. of that name, by the mercy of God, pope, and our lord, and to his successor in the government of the church, we do promise, offer, and swear true obedience, and subject, with humility, at his feet, our person and empire; so help us God and these holy gospels before us."—After this, each man swore personal obedience, officers, priests, and monks, according to their several orders or conditions.

The prince royal Facilidas, purely and simply in the form prescribed, took this oath, without any addition or alteration. But Ras Sela Christos, heated with zeal, after repeating the formula, drawing his sword in violent passion, uttered these words, "What has passed let it be past; but, from this day forward, he that falls from his duty this shall be his judge*."

This hasty speech, not well understood, was thought by some to reflect on those he had discovered to be in the confederacy with the rebel son of Gabriel. As the court was full of parties and discontent, every one applied the threat to himself, and all joined in a league to undo Sela Christos, who had so wantonly declared himself the leader and champion of persecution.

To this oath of obedience to the pope, he likewise added one to the king, and to the prince his successor,

* It is apparently a speech in a passion, for this Sela Christos was one of the most learned of the Abyssinians; yet the words themselves, if literally translated, are scarcely intelligible.

successor, Facilidas, with a strange clause, or qualification, which made what he said formerly still worse:—"I likewise swear to the prince, as heir of his father in this empire, as long as he shall hold favour, and defend the holy Catholic faith; and if he shall fail in this, I hereby swear to be his greatest enemy." This extravagant addition he insisted should be imposed upon all the officers of state, and of the army then at court, and therefore did most deservedly seal his own condemnation and punishment, which overtook him in the end, though it did not follow till long afterwards.

To these violent proceedings were added others still more violent. A solemn excommunication was pronounced against all such as did not keep that oath, and a proclamation was forthwith made, "That all people, in the line of being ordained priests, should first embrace the Catholic religion upon pain of death; that all should observe the form of the church of Rome in the celebration of Easter and Lent, under the same penalty;" and with that the ceremonies of the day ended.

Tempus erit cum magno optaverit emptum,

Intactum Pallanta.

It was a day ever to be marked with black, not only in the annals of Ethiopia, but in those of Rome.

Although the arrival of the patriarch at Bilur had been happily effected, both as to himself and those that attended him, it was not so with some of his brethren sent to assist him in that mission.

Two Jesuits, Francisco Machado and Bernard Pereira, had received the king's letters in India for their safe conduct to Bilur in Dancali. Whether by malice, or inadvertency, the king's secretary, instead of Bilur, had mentioned Zeyla in the letter.

Zeyla, an island belonging to the king of Adel, was of all other places that where the people were most inveterate against the Catholic religion. No sooner did the Shekh know the quality and errand of these missionaries, than he confined them to close prison, where, after great suffering, they were both put to death; and, to aggravate this, a letter was written to Socinios stigmatizing him with the name of apostate from the religion of his forefathers, and applying to him many opprobrious names.

This letter, at another time, would not have failed to have been followed by the chastisement it deserved. But Adel, formerly a flourishing and commercial kingdom, was now fallen, and reduced to a multitude of banditti. Trade had left it. A garrison of nominal janizaries, since the reign of Sultan Selim, had kept the little island of Zeyla for the pretended purpose of a customhouse; but, in fact, it was a post of robbers, who only maintained themselves there for the sake of plundering merchants who came by sea; while the Galla poured in numbers upon the prince from the continent, and of the ancient kingdom of Adel, had left him nothing but Auffa the capital, a town situated upon a rock, on the banks of the river Hawash, Azab, Raheeta, and a few other miserable villages upon

the sea ; and even part of these were daily falling into the hands of that enemy, destined very soon to over-run them all. This abject state to which they had been reduced, we may suppose, was the only reason that protected them from the vengeance of a high-spirited prince, such as Socinius certainly was.

This violent conduct of Socinius in his abjuration was followed by that of the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, perfectly in the same spirit. The clergy were re-ordained, their churches consecrated anew, grown men as well as children again baptized, the moveable feasts and festivals reduced to the forms and times of the church of Rome ; circumcision, polygamy, and divorce were abrogated for ever ; and the many questions that thereupon arose, and which were understood to belong to the civil judge, the patriarch called to his tribunal exclusively.

All the tenets of the church of Alexandria, whether of faith or discipline, were rejected ; and it was not known how far the patriarch intended to subject the civil jurisdiction of the judges to the ecclesiastical power. Two steps that he took, the one immediately after the other, seemed to give great reason of fear upon this head.

In order to understand the first of these cases, it will be necessary to know, that it is a fundamental constitution of the monarchy of Ethiopia, that all lands belong to the king ; and that there is no such thing as church-lands in this country. Those that the king has given for the maintenance of churches or monasteries are resumed every day, at
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the instance of and for the convenience of individuals, and new ones granted in their stead sometimes of a greater value, sometimes of a less. Nor have the priests or monks any property in these lands. A lay-officer, appointed by the king, divides to each monk or priest, his quota of the revenue, applying any overplus to other uses, which is, we may suppose, often putting it into his own pocket.

There was a nobleman of great distinction for his family and rank at court, for his age, and the merit of his service; he had occupied some of the lands belonging to a monk who happened to be a Catholic. This man, had he been an Alexandrian, could have had no recourse to the Abuna his patriarch, and the cause must have been tried before the civil judge. But Mendes was of another opinion. He ordered the nobleman to make his defence before the ecclesiastical tribunal; and, upon his refusing this as a novelty to which he was not bound, he condemned him immediately to restore the lands to the monk. This, too, was refused on the part of the present possessor, who being one day attending the king at church, the patriarch, without preamble, pronounced against him a formal sentence of excommunication, by which he gave him over, soul and body, to the devil.

Such procedure was, till then, unknown in Abyssinia. The nobleman, though otherwise brave, was so much affected with the terms of his sentence as to faint, imagining himself already in the clutches of Satan, and it was with difficulty he was reco-

vered, the king making intercession with the patriarch to take off this censure, or rather this curse.

Sudden as it was, however, in the inflicting, and easy in the removal, it made very lasting and serious impressions on the minds of men of all ranks, greatly to the disadvantage of the patriarch and the professors of his new religion, in the exercise of which they did not discover that degree of charity, meekness, mercy, and long-suffering, that they had been taught were the very essentials of it.

The next instance was this: There had been an Itchegue, that is, the superior of the monks of Debra Libanos, an Order instituted by Abba Tecla Haimanout, the last Abyssinian Abuna, not more celebrated by the church than the state, as being the restorer of the line of Solomon, for many years banished to Shoa; and this superior, besides the dignity of his office, was remarkable for an innocent, pious, and holy life. It happened that a Catholic monk officiated in a church where this Itchegue had been buried under the altar; the patriarch declared the church defiled by the burial of that heretic and schismatic, and suspended the celebration of divine service till the body was raised and thrown out of the church in a most indecent manner. Universal discontent seized the minds of all men; and, from that time, it seemed the friends of the old religion began again to recover strength, and the Catholics to be looked upon, if not with hatred, yet terror. And every trifle now contributed towards the one or the other.

The Jesuits, following practices or customs of their own, had thought fit to exhibit a kind of religious

ligious plays or farces. The devil in these pieces is always the buffoon; he plays harlequin and flight-of-hand tricks, fires squibs and gun-powder, very little consistent with the decency of the other persons who compose the drama. This continued to be practised in several Catholic countries in Europe, while that learned company existed *. It happened to be necessary to introduce figures of this kind blacked all over, and in masks, with cloven feet, &c. The first exhibition of these figures so surpris'd and terrified the Abyssinian audience, that they fled immediately upon their appearance, crying out, Alas! alas! these Franks have brought devils into our country with them!

This great extension of civil jurisdiction, and the large strides it took to annihilate the civil power, the encroachments it made upon the prerogative of the king, till now supreme in all causes ecclesiastical and civil, the more than regal, the more, if possible, than papal pride of the patriarch, began to be felt universally, and it was seen to be intended to lessen every order of government, from the king to the lowest officer in the province. From this time, therefore, we date the decline of the Catholic interest in Abyssinia. The first blow was given it by the king himself, not with a view to destroy it, for he was a sincere Catholic upon principle, but to control and keep it within some bounds, as he found there was no order could otherwise be maintained.

He desired the patriarch to permit the use of the ancient liturgies of Ethiopia, altered by himself in every

* I have seen them often at Madrid.

every thing where they did not agree with that of the church of Rome. With this the patriarch was obliged to comply, because there was in it an appearance of reason that men should pray to God in a language that they understood, and which was their own, rather than a foreign tongue of which they did not understand one word. This was thought so obvious in Ethiopia as not to admit any doubt. But the order and practice of the church of Rome was just the contrary; and this wound was a mortal one; for no sooner was the permission given to use their own liturgies, than all the Abyssinians embraced them to a man, and went on in their old prayers and services without any of the patriarch's alterations.

To these events, not important in themselves, but only from the effect they had upon the minds of mankind, succeeded tragedies of a more serious nature. I have already observed, in speaking of the Galla, that they were divided into three principal divisions, those on the east of Abyssinia were called Bertuma Galla, those on the south called Toluma, and those on the west Boren Galla; each of these were divided into seven, and these again subdivided into a number of tribes. Each of these seven nations choose a king once in seven years called Lubo; and it is usually the first act of the new king's reign to over-run the neighbouring provinces of Abyssinia, laying every thing waste with fire and sword for this year, even if they had no provocation, but had been at peace for several years before.

The Abyssinians remained long in ignorance of this cause of these invasions, and, while that was
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the case, they could take no measures to be prepared against, and resist them. But after, when the customs of the Galla were better known, their periodical invasions were watched and provided against, so that though they were still continued, they were generally repelled with the slaughter and defeat of the invaders.

It happened that the present year, 1627, was the season of electing the king, and of the invasion. Though the time of the expedition was known, no intelligence had been given of the manner in which it was to be executed. In past times, the nations, or tribes of Galla, assaulted each the opposite province in whose frontiers they were settled; but this year it was agreed among them to choose one province, Gojam, which, by uniting their whole force, they were to devote to destruction, or, if possible, keep possession of it.

Buco was governor of Gojam; the king had sent Sela Christos to his assistance, and was intending to follow with another army himself. In the mean time, the passes, through which the Galla used to enter were all lined with men, and every preparation made to receive them.

These barbarians advanced to the Nile in multitudes never seen before; and, finding the province perfectly on its guard, they feigned a panic, or disagreement among themselves, retired in seeming confusion, and dispersed, some, as it was said, to their own homes, and some to an expedition against Narea. This in reality had often happened; but now it was only a stratagem; for they all assembled in their own country Bizamo, of which
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the Abyssinians had no intelligence. Buce, thinking he was free of them for that year, disbanded his troops, or detached them to other services; Sela Christos did the same; neither did Socinius advance with his army.

In that interval of weakness, news were sent to Buce that the Galla had passed the Nile. Upon which he advanced with 1000 foot and 200 horse, believing that it was some small part of that army which he thought had some time before been dispersed. After hearing mass with great devotion, and receiving the sacrament, in passing through a thick wood he was assaulted by the Galla. Being a man, brave in his own person, and exceedingly well-trained to arms, he fought so successfully, and so encouraged his men by his example, that he cut that body of Galla entirely to pieces; and, as he thought the whole matter then at an end, he ordered his drums to beat, and his trumpets to sound, in token of victory.

The rest of the Galla, who were now dispersed through the province, but at no great distance, burning and destroying, as their custom is, and who left this body behind them only to secure their retreat across the river, returned all to their colours, upon hearing the drums and trumpets of Kasmati Buce, whom they did not know to be so near; and, as soon as he came in sight, despising his small number, they surrounded them on every side. Buce immediately saw that he was a lost man; but, considering the multitude of the enemy, and the unprepared state of the province, he thought his own life and those of his followers could

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not be better employed than by obstinately fighting to disable the enemy, so as to put it out of their power to pursue the ruin of the country further; throwing himself furiously into the thickest of the Galla, he, at first onset, killed four of the most forward of their leaders, and made himself a lane through the troops opposing him; and he was now got without their circle, when some of his officers seeing him, cried to him to make the best of his way, as affairs were desperate, and not to add by his death to the misfortunes of that day.

Upon this he paused, as recollecting himself for a moment; but, disdaining to survive the loss of his army, he threw himself again among the Galla, where his men were still fighting, carrying victory wherever he went. His horse was at last wounded, and, being otherwise young and untrained, became ungovernable. It was necessary to quit him, when, drawing his sword, and leaping upon the ground, he continued the fight with the same degree of courage, till the Galla, who did not dare to approach him near, killed him by a number of javelins thrown at a distance.

The news of the defeat and death of Bucu reached Sela Christos, then in march to join him; nor did the misfortunes that had already happened, nor the bad prospect of his own situation, alter his resolution of attacking the enemy: But he first wrote to the king his brother, telling him his situation, and the probable consequences of doing his duty as he had determined, laying all the blame upon the malice of his enemies, who, to gratify their own private malice, had left him without assistance,

sistance, and occasioned misfortunes so detrimental to the common-weal.

Sela Christos passed this night upon a rising ground, and in the morning early descended into the plain, with a view of attacking the Galla, when, to his great surprize, that barbarous people, content with the slaughter of Kafmati Bucu and his army, and not willing to risk a large quantity of plunder with which their whole army was loaded, had repassed the Nile, and returned home.

Tecla Georgis was son-in-law to Socinios, and then governor of Tigré, but at variance with his father-in-law upon some quarrel with his wife. Determined on this account to rebel, he associated with some noblemen of the first rank and power in Tigré, particularly Guebra Mariam and John Akayo, declaring to them, that he would no longer suffer the Roman religion, but defend the ancient church of Alexandria to the utmost of his power. And, to convince all the Abyssinians of his sincerity, he tore off the figures of crucifixes and all the church ornaments and images of saints that were in relief, and burned them publicly, to make his reconciliation with the king impossible. He then called before him Abba Jacob his Catholic chaplain, and, having stripped him of his pontificals, killed him with his own hand. There was no method he could devise of bringing his quarrel sooner to an issue than this which he had adopted. But he did not seem to have taken equal pains to provide for his defence as he had done to give provocation.

Socinios,

Socinius, upon the first intelligence of this murder and treason, ordered Keba Christos to march against him with the troops that he had at hand. This general, equally a good foldier, subject, and Catholic, being convinced of the necessity of punishing speedily so monstrous a crime, passed by forced marches through Siré to Axum, thence to Fremona ; and, having appointed Gaspar Paez to meet him there, he confessed himself, and received the sacrament from that Jesuit's hands. From Fremona he continued with the same speed, making three ordinary days marches in one, being desirous of preventing the possibility of Tecla Georgis's collecting troops, and taking refuge on a mountain called *Maska*, which he heard to be his design.

It was the 12th of December 1628 that news were brought him of the situation of the enemy ; upon which he ordered his baggage to be left behind, and every foldier to carry two loaves, and to march without resting till he came up with Tecla Georgis.

In the morning of the day following, two horsemen, on the scout before him, discovered five of the rebel soldiers upon the look-out likewise. These, upon seeing Keba Christos's horsemen, returned immediately to their master, and told him that they had seen armed men, and conceived them to be the soldiers of Keba Christos. To this intelligence Tecla Georgis answered, That Keba Christos was in the king's palace at Dancaz the 15th of November, and that it was impossible he then
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could be so near with an army, if he had even wings to fly; but that the men they had seen were probably reinforcements that he expected.

Keba Christos, on the contrary, hearing that the enemy was at hand, drew up his army in three divisions. The first consisted of his own household, the second of a body of horse of the king's household, called *the Koccob Horse*, or *Star Cavalry*, from a silver star which each of them wears on the front of his helmet; and the third, of the people of Tigre who had joined him. In this order he came in sight of his enemy posted upon a small height, divided only from him by a narrow plain. Tecla Georgis, convinced now that it was Keba Christos, formed his army into two divisions; the one composed of a body called *Tcheraguas*, the other of a body called *Sultan ba Christos*; with these was a large corps of Galla which had lately joined them.

Keba Christos, now turning to his troops, briefly said, "My children, I will not waste my time nor yours in discourse, or in telling you what you are to do. You have all arms in your hands; you are good Christians; and I can positively assure you there is not before you one of your enemies that is not also an enemy to Christ." Then, placing himself before the Koccob horse, he pulled off his helmet and gave it to his servant, saying, "By my naked face you shall know me to-day, that I am not going in the midst of you as general or commander, but foot for foot along with you like a common soldier."

Upon having uncovered his head, he was quickly known by Tecla Georgis, from whose troops a number of muskquets was fired at him. But this had so little effect upon this gallant officer, that, changing his place, (which then was at the head of the second division) he placed himself still nearer the enemy in the front of his own household troops, which were the first; and the Galla charging them in that instant, he slew their leader with his own hand. Upon the death of their commander, these barbarians immediately fled, as is their custom, while Keba Christos endeavoured to make his way to where Tecla Georgis was employed keeping his troops from following so bad an example. But so soon as that rebel saw his enemy approach him, he and his whole army joined the Galla in their flight; tho' he narrowly escaped, by the swiftness of his horse, a light javelin, thrown by Keba Christos, striking him behind, but so feebly by reason of the distance, that it did not pierce his armour.

The king's troops pursued vigorously, and soon brought to their general the mule, the sword, and helmet of Tecla Georgis, with the heads of 300 slain in the battle, most of them Gallas, and with them 12 heads of the most turbulent rebellious monks of Tigre. With these they also brought Adera, sister to Tecla Georgis, wounded in the throat, who had instigated him very strongly to commit the violences against the professors of the Catholic religion. Tafa, too, his master of the household, was taken prisoner; and it being made known to Keba Christos that this man had assisted

at the murder of Abba Jacob, he ordered him directly to be put to death.

Tecla Georgis, aided by the strength of his horse and knowledge of the country, escaped and concealed himself from his pursuers for four days; but, on the Saturday that followed the victory, he was found in a cavern with his great confidants, Woldo Mariam, and a schismatic monk whose name was Sebo Amlac. Tecla Georgis was carried alive to Keba Christos, who sent him to the king, his two companions being slain as soon as found, and their heads accompanied their living master, which, on their arrival at Dancaz, the king ordered to be hung upon a tree.

Tecla Georgis being convicted of sacrilege as well as murder, having burnt the crucifixes and images of the saints, was condemned to be burnt alive, and a lime-kiln was immediately prepared in which he was to suffer. Upon hearing this, he desired a Catholic confessor, as wishing to be reconciled to the church of Rome, and for this purpose he sent a request to the patriarch, who was at three leagues distance, and who dispatched Antonio Fernandes with full powers to absolve from all manner of sins, and at the same time gave him orders to intercede strongly with the king to pardon the criminal. Tecla Georgis confessed publicly at the door of the church, and abjured the errors of the church of Alexandria.

After this, the father Fernandes applied to the king, pleading strongly for his pardon. To which the king answered, "Many reasons there are why I should desire to pardon Tecla Georgis. To say no
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more, he has been married to two of my daughters, and he has by them two sons, both good soldiers and horsemen, who actually ride before me, and accompany me in battle. I have therefore pardoned him all the affronts and injuries he has done to me. But, were I take upon myself to pardon the affronts and insults he has offered the Divine Majesty, I should turn the punishment of his sins upon myself, my family, and kingdom; and, therefore, I refuse your petition, and order you to return forthwith to Gorgora.”

After the departure of the father, in consideration that Tecla Georgis had again embraced the Catholic religion, the king altered his sentence of being burnt, into that of being hanged privately in the house where he was then in prison; and, for that purpose, the executioner had brought with him the cord with which Tecla had ordered the feet of Abba Jacob to be tied. No sooner did he perceive that there were no hopes of pardon, by their beginning to tie his hands, than he again, with a loud voice, renounced his confession, declaring that he died an Alexandrian, and that there was but one nature in Christ. The executioner endeavoured to stop his further blasphemies, by drawing him up on the beam in the room; but he resisted so strongly that there was time to inform Socinius of his abjuration: upon which the king ordered that he should be hanged publicly upon a pine-tree; and he was accordingly taken down, half-strangled, from the beam in the house, and hung upon the tree before the palace.

Adera, his sister, was next examined; and it being clearly proved that she had been a very active agent in the murder of Abba Jacob, she likewise was condemned to be hanged upon the same tree with her brother, fifteen days afterwards.

All that interval, the queen and ladies at court employed their utmost interest with the king to pardon Adera, for they looked upon it as a disgraceful thing, both to their sex and quality, that a woman of her family should be thus executed. All the ladies of the court having joined, therefore, in a public petition to the king while on his throne, he is said to have answered them by the following short parable:—

“ There was once an old woman, who being told of the death of an infant, said, with great indifference, Children are but tender; it is no wonder that they die, for any thing will kill a child. Being told of a youth dying, she observed, Young people are forward and rash; they are always in the way of some disaster; no wonder they die; it is impossible it should be otherwise. But being told an old woman was dead, she began to tear her hair, and lament, crying, Now the world is at an end if old women begin to die, fearing that her turn might be the next. In this manner all of you have seen Tecla Georgis die, and also several of his companions, and you have not said a word. But now it is come to the hanging of one woman, you are all alarmed, and the world is at an end. Do not then deceive yourselves, but be assured that the same cord which tied the feet of Abba Jacob, still remains sufficient to hang that sow Adera, and
all

all those that shall be so wicked as to behave like her, to the disgrace of your sex, and their own rank and quality."

The effects of these ostentatious acts of reformation soon produced consequences which troubled their joy. The Agows of Lasta, called Tcheratz Agow, who live at the head of the Tacazze, rebelled. The country they occupy is not extensive, but exceedingly populous, and was supposed at that time to be able to bring into the field above 50,000 fighting men, besides leaving behind a sufficient number to defend the passes and strong-holds of their country, which are by much the most difficult and inaccessible of any in Abyssinia. They are divided into five clans, Waag, Tettera, Dehaanah, Gouliou, and Louta, each having an independent chief. They are exceedingly warlike; and, though the country be so rude and rocky, they have a considerable number of good horses; and are in general reckoned among the bravest and most barbarous soldiers in Abyssinia. Their province abounds with all sorts of provisions, and they rarely can be forced to pay any thing to government in the name of tax, or tribute.

Tecla Georgis was now dead, but the cause of the rebellion still subsisted. While governor of Begender, he had connived at many abuses of his officers who occupied the posts nearest to Lasta. These being young men, from wantonness only, without provocation, had made many different inroads, driving away cattle, and committing many other excesses. The Agows carried their complaints to the governor, who, far from hearing or redressing

redressing their wrongs, justified the conduct of his officers, by making inroads himself immediately after; but coming to an action in person with that people, he was shamefully beat, and a great part of his army left dead upon the field.

This misfortune very much affected Socinius. Nor did the Agows themselves doubt, but that a speedy chastisement was to follow this victory over Tecla Georgis.

There was a youth descended of the royal family, who, to preserve the freedom of his person, lived among the Galla, in expectation of better times. His name was Melca Christos. To him the Agows applied, that, with this prince of the house of Solomon at their head, they might wipe off the odium of being reputed rebels, and appear as fighting under a lawful sovereign for reformation of abuses. The renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, forcibly obtruded upon them by Socinius, served as cause of complaint. The Roman Catholic writers in the history of this mission, say this was but a pretext, in which I conceive they are right. I have lived among the Agows of Lafta, and in intimacy with many of them, who are not, to this day, so anxious about Christianity as to ascend one of their hills for the difference between that and Paganism; and I am satisfied, for these 300 years last past there has been scarcely a common layman in Lafta that has known the distinction between the Alexandrian and the Roman church.

In the beginning of February 1629 the king marched from Dancaz towards Gojam, where he collected

collected an army of 30,000 men, which, with the baggage, servants, and attendants, at that time very great and numerous, amounted to above 80,000 men.

Socinius detached a number of small parties to enter Lafta at different places. On the other hand, Melca Chriftos affembled his troops on the moft inaccessible rocks; whence, when he faw occafion, he came fuddenly down and furprifed the enemy below. Among all the rude, high, and tremendous mountains of which this country confifts, there is one efppecially, called by the name of *Lafta*. It is in the territory of Waag, ftrongly furrounded with inaccessible precipices, having a large plain on the top, abounding with every thing neceffary, and watered by a fine ftream that never fails.

The manner in which the Agows remained fecure in this ftrong poft was mifconftituted into fear by the king's army, which, in two divifions, advanced to the attack of the mountain. That on the right had with fome difficulty scrambled up without oppofition; but, being now arrived to the fteep part of the rock, fuch a number of large ftones was rolled down upon them from above, that this divifion of the army was entirely deftroyed. The number of ftones on the brink of the precipices was inexhauftible; and, once put in motion, purfued the fattered troops with unavoidable fpeed, even down to the plains below. Among the flain was Guebra Chriftos, the king's fon-in-law, dafhed to pieces by the fragment of a rock. The left divifion was upon the point of fuffering the fame misfortune, had not Keba Chriftos

come to their relief and drawn them off, just before the enemy had begun to discharge this irresistible artillery against them.

The king, thus shamefully beaten, retired to Dancaz; leaving the entrances from Lasta strongly defended, lest these mountaineers should, by way of retaliation, fall upon the province of Begemder. But the late ill-fortune had dispirited the troops, and caused an indifference about duty, a want of obedience, and a relaxation in discipline in the whole army. Each of the detachments, therefore, one after the other, left their post from different excuses, and returned home. The bad consequence of this was now experienced. The Agows entered Begemder spreading desolation everywhere. Melca Christos, no longer sculking among the rocks of Lasta, planted his standard upon the plain, within five days march of the capital where the king was residing.

The jealousies that had arisen between Socinios and his brother-in-law Sela Christos, had been so much aggravated since the oath administered by the patriarch, that the king had again deprived him of Gojam, suffering him to live in obscurity in Damot, and among the Agows, occupied, as the Jesuits say, in the conversion of that Pagan people; by destroying their idols, which they represent to be a species of cane or bamboo *, and in forbidding the ceremonies of adoration and devotion, which at stated times they paid to the river.

No

* Called by the Agows, Krihaha.

No remedy could be proposed, but the presence of Sela Christos, who, upon the first warning, joined the king, and coming suddenly upon the army of Lasta occupied in laying waste the low country of Begemder, gave them such an overthrow that sufficiently compensated the first loss of the king, and forced them again to take refuge among their strong-holds in Lasta.

A misfortune of another kind followed this victory: Laecc Mariam, a near relation to the king, was appointed governor of Begemder; but no sooner did he see himself vested with that government, than he meditated shaking off his allegiance to Socinios.

The king, after his last battle with the Agows, had named his son Facilidas commander in chief of his forces; and, to secure him a powerful and able assistant, he had first restored Sela Christos to his government of Gojam, then sent him with an army to join Facilidas, and command under him.

The success was answerable to the prudence of the measure; for, immediately upon their arrival, they obliged Laeca Mariam to seek for refuge in the mountains of Ambara, and, without giving him time to recollect himself there, forced their way to the mountain to which he had retired, and from which he and his followers had no way to escape, but by venturing down a steep precipice; in attempting this, Laeca Mariam fell, and was dashed to pieces, as were many others of his followers; the rest were slain by the army that pursued them.

At this time, Facilidas began to attract the eyes of the nation in general. Besides personal bravery, he

he had shewn great military talents in the former campaign of Lafta. Though young, he was in capacity and refolution equal to his father, but lefs warm, more referved in his temper and difcourfe. He was thought to be an enemy to the Catholic religion, becaufe he did not promote it, and neither exceeded nor fell fhort of what his father commanded him. Yet, he lived with the Jefuits on fuch an even footing, that they confefs they did not know whether he was their friend or enemy: he kept one of their number, called Father Angelis, constantly in his houfehold, where he was much favoured, and constantly in his prefence. He was thought to be an enemy to Sela Chriftos, though he never had fhewn it.

Facilidas received a flattering meffage from Urban VIII. but did not answer it; nor does it appear his father ever defired him; for, through the whole courfe of the life of Socinios, as his enemies are forced to confefs, he paid to his father's will, the moft paffive obedience in every thing. The tyranny, however, of church-government began to appear unmasked; and it is probable that the king, though refolved to die a Roman Catholic from principles of confcience, was indifferent about forging for his fon the chains he had himfelf worn with pain.

However this may be, the laft ftep of placing Facilidas at the head of the army was conftrued as another ftroke of humiliation to the Catholics, efpecially as it was followed with the removal of Keba Chriftos (the fupport of that religion) from court, where he had been appointed Billetana Gue-

ta. It is true he was removed by what, in other times, would have been called preferment; but things had now changed their qualities, and places were not estimated, as formerly, by the consequence they gave in the empire, but by the opportunities they afforded of constant access to the king, and occasion of joining in councils with him, and defeating those of their enemies.

Keba Christos being sent governor to Tigre, was to enter Lasta from that quarter on the N. E. He is said to have received his appointment with a great degree of concern, and to have told his friends, that he foresaw he never was to return from that expedition, which he did not regret, because he was convinced, by living much longer, it would be made his duty to assist at the fall of the Catholic religion.

After having performed his devotions at Fremona, this general advanced through Gouliou, a territory mostly inhabited by Galla, and destitute of any sort of provisions; after which he took possession of the mountains of Lasta, with a view to cover the march of the young prince Facilidas, whom he every day expected. But that prince not appearing in time, and provisions becoming scarce, no measure remained but making his retreat to Tigre; and, although he formed the best disposition for that purpose, the people of Lasta observing his intention in time, on his first movement attacked his rear-guard while he was descending the mountain, and put it to flight: being thereby masters of the higher ground, they had the command of the cowardly soldiers below them, who could
not

not insure their destruction more certainly than by the indecent manner in which they were flying.

Keba Christos, deserted by all except a few servants, continued courageously fighting; and, although it was very possible for him to have escaped, he disdained to survive the loss of his army. Receiving at that time a wound from a javelin, which passed through his belly, and judging the stroke to be mortal, he gave up all further resistance, fell upon his knees to prayer, and was again wounded by a stone, which struck him to the ground. Two of the mountaineers immediately came up to him, one of whom did not know him, and contented himself with stripping the body; but the other remembering his face, cut his head off, and carried it to the rebel Melca Christos.

The misfortune was followed by another in Gogjam, great to the nation in general, and greater still to the Catholic cause in particular. At the time that Sela Christos was in Begemder with prince Facilidas, the Galla from Bizamo, supposing the province of Damot without defence, passed the Nile, laying the whole province waste before them. Fecur Egzie, lieutenant-general under Sela Christos, although he had with him only a small number of troops, did not hesitate to march against those savages, to endeavour, if possible, to stop their ravages. The Galla, surprised at this, thought it was Sela Christos, and fled before him. He had now pursued them almost alone, and lighted in a low meadow to give grass to his horse, when he was surrounded and slain by a number of the enemy
that

that lay hid among the bushes, and discovered how ill he was attended.

He was reputed a man of the best understanding, and the most liberal sentiments of any in Ethiopia; a great orator, excelling both in the gracefulness of manner and copiousness and purity of his language. He was among the first that embraced the Catholic religion, even before the king or Sela Christos, and was the principal promoter of the translations of the Portuguese books into Ethiopic, assisted by the Jesuit Antonio de Angelis. We have seen, in 1613, the great efforts he made in the embassy to India by the coast of Melinda. He was an excellent horseman, but more violent and rash in battle than could have been expected from a man of such mild manners.

There happened at this time another novelty. The king brought the patriarch from Gongora to Dancaz this year, at Easter, to hear that feast celebrated, with the Ethiopic service amended, of which we have already spoken abundantly. This countenance, so unnecessarily given to an innovation that produced every day such very bad effects to the Catholic interest, joined to many other circumstances, seemed clearly to indicate a change in that prince's mind.

The patriarch having made but a short stay at Dancaz, it was currently reported a disagreement had happened, and that the king had sent him prisoner to Gorgora; and this false report affected greatly the weight the Catholics were supposed before to have had at court. But the transaction that followed

followed was of a nature to promise much more consequences.

Socinius had a daughter called *Ozoro Wengelawit*, which means the Evangelical, a name she certainly deserved not from her manners. This lady was first married to Bela Christos, a man of rank at court, from whom she had been divorced. She was next married to another, and then (her two former husbands being still alive) to Tecla Georgis, who had before married her sister, another of the king's daughters. During this marriage she had openly lived in adultery with Za Christos, who had been married to her sister, a third daughter of the king. Za Christos had been happy enough in preserving this lady's esteem longer than any other of her husbands, and nothing would content her now but a marriage with her lover solemnly and publicly. For which purpose she applied to the patriarch to dispense with the affinity between her and Za Christos, arising from his having been married before to her sister.

It is not to be supposed that the patriarch would have resisted, if nothing had stood in the way except the affinity: but weighty impediments presented themselves besides; for either the first marriage was valid, or it was not. If it was valid, then Wengelawit, could not marry Za Christos or any one else, because her husband was alive; nor could she marry her second, nor Tecla Georgis, her third. If the first marriage was not valid, then the second was, which husband was still alive; and, in this case, a licence to marry was giving her liberty of having three husbands at one time. The patriarch,

patriarch, for these reasons, refused his authority to this manifold adultery and incest; nor could he, notwithstanding the intercession of the whole court, ever be brought to comply. His firmness (however commendable) greatly increased the hatred to his person, and aversion to the church of Rome.

One day when the king was sitting in his apartment, a monk entered the room, crying with a loud voice, "Hear the ambassador of God and of the Virgin Mary!" The king, upon first sight of the man, expecting some improper liberty might be taken, ordered his attendants to turn him out at the door, and, being removed from his presence, to bring word what he had to say, which was to this effect: "It is three days since I rose from the dead. One day when I was standing in paradise, God called me, and sent me with this message to you: —O emperor! says God, it is now many years that I hoped you would amend of the great sin, the having forsaken the faith of your ancestors. All this time the Virgin Mary was kneeling before her blessed Son, beseeching him to pardon you; and, upon the whole, it was agreed, that, unless you repent in a fortnight's time, you should be punished in such a manner that you will not forget it presently."

Socinius desired them to ask the man, "How it was possible that, having so lately left the grave, his body should have so little of the emaciated appearance of one long buried, and be now in such good case, fat and fair?" To this he answered, "That, in paradise, he thanked God, there was abundance of every thing; and people were very well

well used there, for he had lived upon good bread, and plenty of good wine, biskets, and sweetmeats." To which Socinios answered, " Tell him, after the pains he had taken, it would be wrong in me to keep him from so good a place as this his paradise. Let him go and acquaint the person who sent him, I shall live and die in the Roman Catholic faith; and, in order that he may deliver the message quickly in the other world, speed him instantly out of this, by hanging him upon the tree before the palace-gate."

The love of the wine, sweetmeats, and other celestial food, seemed to have forsaken the ambassador. Upon hearing this message he recanted, and was pardoned at the joint petition of those of the court, that were present, who concurred with the monk in thinking, that the message of the emperor was an indecent one, and ought not to be delivered; that having been in paradise once, was as much as fell to the lot of any one man, and that he should therefore remain upon earth. The intended catastrophe, then, of this singular ambassador was remitted; but the truth of his mission was believed by the populace, and raised great scruples in every weak mind.

The many misfortunes that had lately befallen the troops of the king were accounted as so much increase of power to the rebel Melca Christos, who, encouraged by the correspondence he held with the chiefs of the Alexandrian religion, began now to take upon him the state and office of a king. His first essay was to send, as governor to the province of Tigre, a son of that great rebel Za Selasse, whose manifold

manifold treasons, we have already seen, occasioned the death of two kings, Za Dengehel and Jacob.

Afca Georgis was then governor of Tigre for Socinios, a man of merit and valour, but poor, and though related to the king himself, had very few soldiers to be depended on, excepting his own servants, and two bodies of troops which the king had sent him to maintain his authority, and to keep his province in order.

The new governor, sent by the rebel Melca Christos, had with him a considerable army; and, knowing the weakness of Afca Georgis, he paraded through the province in the utmost security.

One Saturday which, in defiance of the king's, edict, he was to solemnize as a festival equal to Sunday, he had resolved on a party of pleasure in a valley, where, much at his ease, he was preparing an entertainment for his troops and friends and such of the province as came to offer their obedience. Intelligence of this party came to three Shums, commanders of small districts, two of them sons-in-law of the king, the third a very loyal subject. These three sent to Afca Georgis, to propose that, at a stated time, they should, each with his own men, fall separately upon the son of Za Selasse, and interrupt his entertainment.

This was executed with great order and punctuality. In the height of the festival, the rebels were surrounded by an unexpected enemy. To think of fighting was too late, nor was there time for flight. The greatest part of the army was cut to pieces with little resistance. The new governor saved himself among the rest by the goodness of his

his horse, leaving Billetana Gueta, or chief master of the household of the rebel Melca Christos, dead upon the spot, with about 4000 of his men. Among the plunder were taken 32 kettle-drums, which alone were evidence sufficient of the greatness of the slaughter.

Although the happy turn Socinios's affairs had taken had given him leisure to pass this winter at home, and greater quiet than he had done in former ones, yet the calm which it had produced was of very short duration. The people of Lasta, perceiving some of the prince's army busy in destroying their harvest when almost ripe, came down suddenly upon them from the mountain, and put them to flight with very great slaughter. The blame of this was laid upon Sela Christos, who might have prevented the calamity; and this accusation, with many others, were brought against him to the king by Lefana Christos.

This man had been condemned to die for an offence, some time before, by Ras Sela Christos; but having fled to the king, who heard his cause, the sentence was reversed. Some time after this he fell into the hands of the Ras, who put him to death upon his former sentence, without regarding the late pardon of the king. This violent act became the foundation upon which his enemies built many accusations, mostly void of truth.

The king upon this took from him the government of Gojam, and gave it to a young nobleman whose name was Serca Christos, supposed to be a friend and dependent upon the prince Facilidas.

Serca

Serca Christos was no sooner arrived in his government than he resolved to rebel, and privately solicited the young prince Facilidas to take up arms and make a common cause against the king his father, in favour of the Alexandrian church. At the time that the young man departed to his government, Socinios had earnestly recommended to him, and he had most solemnly promised, to protect the Catholic religion in his province, and seemingly for this purpose he had taken with him a Jesuit named Francisco de Carvalho.

Another affair which the king particularly charged him with was, the care of a caravan which once a-year came from Narea. This, besides many other valuable articles for the merchant, brought 1000 wakeas of gold as tribute to the king, equal to about 10,000 dollars, or crowns of our money: its whole way was through barbarous and lawless nations of Galla till they arrived at the Nile; then through Gafats and Gongas, immediately after having passed it.

Serca Christos, in his march, was come to a settlement of those last-mentioned savages, where Gafats, Agows, and Damots, all in peace, pastured immense flocks of cattle together. There are no where, I believe, in the world, cattle so beautiful as those of the Gafats, nor in such numbers. Large plains, for many days journey, are filled so full of these that they appear as one market.

Serca Christos halted here to give grass to his horses; and, while this was doing, it entered into his young head, that making prize of the cattle was of much greater consequence than protecting the caravan

caravan of Narea. Assembling then his cavalry, he fell upon the poor Gafats and Damots, who feared no harm; and, having soon put them all to flight, he drove off their cattle in such numbers, that, at Dancaz, it was said, above 100,000 had reached that market.

The king, much shocked at this violent robbery, ordered Serca Christos to give up the cattle, and surrender himself as prisoner. This message of the king he answered in terms of duty and obedience; but, in the mean time, went to the prince, and proposed to him to declare himself king and champion of the church of Alexandria. Facilidas received him with sharp reproofs, and he returned home much discontented. However, as he had now declared himself, he resolved to put the best face upon the matter; and, in order to make it generally believed that the prince and he understood each other, he sent him publicly word, "I have done what your highness ordered me; come and take possession of your kingdom." Upon which the prince ordered his messenger to be put in irons, and sent to Dancaz to the king his father.

After this, Serca Christos ordered proclamation to be made that prince Facilidas was king, at the palace of the governor of Gojam, which Sela Christos had built near the convent of Collela. As one article of it was the abolishing the Roman faith, the fathers ran precipitately into the convent, and shut the doors upon themselves, fearing they should be insulted by the army of schismatics; but a number of the Portuguese, who lived in the neighbourhood, being brought into the church with
them

them, and there having loop-holes made in the walls, and abundance of fire-arms left there in deposit by Sela Christos, the rebel governor did not choose to attempt any thing against them at that time. On the contrary, he sent them word that he was in his heart a Roman Catholic, and only, for the present, obliged to dissemble; but he would protect them to the utmost, desiring them to send him the fire-arms left there by Sela Christos, which they absolutely refused to do.

Serca Christos, apprehending that his army (if not acting under some chief of the royal family) would forsake him on the first appearance of the prince, had recourse to a child of the blood-royal, then living in obscurity among his female relations, and this infant he made king, in hopes, if he succeeded, to govern during his minority. There were many who expected the prince would reconcile him to the king, especially as he had yet preserved a shadow of respect for the Jesuits, and this he imagined was one cause why the schismatics had not joined him in the numbers necessary. In order to shew them that he designed no reconciliation with the king, and to make such agreement impossible, he adopted the same sacrilegious example that had so ill succeeded with Tecla Georgis.

Za Selasse, a priest of Selalo, had been heard to say, when Serca Christos was appointed to the government of Gojam, "There is an end of the Catholic faith in this province." Being now called before the governor, he was forbid to say mass according to the forms of the church of Rome. This the priest submitted to; but, being ordered to deny the two natures in Christ, he declared this was a

point of faith which he would never give up, but always confess Christ was perfect God and perfect man. Upon this Serca Christos ordered him to be slain; and he was accordingly thrust through with many lances, repeating these words, God and man! God and man! till his last breath.

Serca Christos had now drawn the sword, and thrown away the scabbard. Upon receiving the news, the king ordered the prince, who waited but his command, to march against him. The murder of Za Selasse had procured an accession of fanatics and monks, but very few soldiers; so that as soon as he heard with what diligence the prince was advancing, he left his whole baggage, and fled into those high and craggy mountains that form the banks of the Nile in Damot.

The prince pressed closely upon him, notwithstanding the difficulty of the ground; so that no safety remained for him but to pass the Nile into the country of the Galla, where he thought himself in safety. In this, however, he was mistaken. He had to do with a general of the most active kind, in the person of Facilidas, who crossed the Nile after him, and, the third day, forced him to a battle on such ground as the prince had chosen, who was likewise much his superior in number of troops. But there was no longer any remedy; Serca Christos made the best that he could of this necessity, and fought with great obstinacy, till his men being for the most part slain, he was forced, with the few that remained, to take refuge on a high hill, whence the prince obliged him to deliver himself up to his mercy without condition.

Facilidas

Facilidas immediately dispatched news of his victory to court, and fifteen days after, he followed himself, bringing Serca Christos, with six of his principal officers and counsellors, loaded with heavy chains. Being interrogated by the judges, What he had to answer for his treasons? the prisoner denied that he had any occasion to answer, because he had already received pardon from the prince. This excuse was not admitted, the prince having disowned it absolutely. Upon which he was sentenced to death; and, though he appealed to the king, his sentence was confirmed.

It was too late to execute the sentence that night, but next morning the seven prisoners were put to death. One of the principal servants of Serca Christos being asked to confess and turn Catholic, abandoned himself to great rage, uttering many curses and blasphemies against the king, who, therefore ordered him to be fastened upon a hook of iron, where he continued his curses till at last he was slain by lances.

Serca Christos, cousin to Socinios, was treated with more respect. He, with seeming candour, declared, that he would die a Catholic; and the king, very desirous of this, gave orders to Diego de Mattos, a priest, to attend him constantly in prison. After which, one night he sent five of his confidential servants, who killed him privately, to prevent his recantation.

Socinios had again taken Gojam from Sela Christos; which last disgrace so affected him, that he desired to retire and live as a private man in that province.

The king, having now no other enemy, all his attention was employed in a campaign against Melca Christos of Lafta. But, as he found his army full of difaffection, it was propofed to him, before he took the field, to content them fo far as to indulge the Alexandrians in fome rites of the old church; and a proclamation was accordingly made by the king, “ That thofe who chofe to ob-
“ ferve the Wednesday as a faft, inftead of Satur-
day, might do it;” and fome other fuch indulgences as thefe were granted, which were underftood to affect the faith.

As foon as this came to the ears of the patriarch, he wrote a very fharp letter to the king, reprov- ing him for the proclamation that he had made; add- ing, that it was an encroachment upon the office of the priefthood, that he, a layman, fhould take upon him to direct in matters merely ecclefiaftical. He warned the king, moreover, that God would call him to the very ftricteft account for this pre- fumption, and reminded him of the words of Azarias the chief prieft to the king Uzziab, and of the punifhment of leprofy that followed the king’s encroachment on the ecclefiaftical function; and infifted upon Socinius contradicting his proclama- tion by another.

Socinius fo far complied, that the alteration made by the laft proclamation was confined to three ar- ticles. Firft, that no liturgy, unlefs amended by the patriarch, was to be ufed in divine fervice. Secondly, that all feafts, excepting Eafter and thofe that depended upon it, fhould be kept according to the ancient computation of time. And, thirdly,
that,

that, whoever chose, might fast on Wednesday, rather than on the Saturday.

At the same time, the king expressed himself as greatly offended at the freedom of the application of the story of Azarias and Uzziah to him. He told the patriarch plainly, that it was not by his sermons, nor those of the fathers, nor by the miracles they wrought, nor by the desire of the people, but by his edicts alone, that the Roman religion was introduced into Ethiopia; and, therefore, that the patriarch had not the least reason to complain of any thing being altered by the authority that first established it. But, from this time, it plainly appears, that Socinius began to entertain ideas, at least of the church discipline and government, very opposite to those he had when he first embraced the Romish religion.

The king now set out in his campaign for Lasta with a large army, which he commanded himself, and under him his son, the prince Facilidas. Upon entering the mountain, he divided his army into three divisions. The first commanded by the prince, and under him Za Mariam Adebo his master of the household, was ordered to attack, scale, and lodge themselves on the highest part of the mountain. The second he gave to Guebra Christos, governor of Begemder; and in this he placed the regiment, or body of troops, called Inaches, veteran soldiers of Sela Christos, and a small, but brave body of troops containing the sons of Portuguese: These he directed to occupy the valleys and low ground. In the center the king commanded in person.

The rebel chief and his mountaineers remained in a state of security; for they neither thought to be so speedily attacked, nor that Socinios could have raised so large an army. They abandoned, therefore, the lower ground, and all took posts upon the heights. The prince advanced to the first entrance, and ordered Damo, his Billetana Gueta, to force it with four companies of good foldiers, who ascended the mountain with great perseverance; and, notwithstanding the obstinate defence of the rebels, made themselves master of that post, having killed two of the bravest officers Melca Christos had, the one named Billene, the other Tecla Mariam, surnamed *defender of the Faith*, because he was the first that brought Galla to the assistance of Melca Christos.

There were likewise slain, at the same time, four priests and five monks, after a desperate resistance; one of whom, calling the king's troops Moors, forbade them to approach for fear of defiling him, and then, with a book in his hand, threw himself over the rock, and was dashed to pieces in the plain below. Here the prince met with an enemy he did not expect: The cold was so excessive, that above fifty persons were frozen to death.

The top of the mountain, which was the second entry into Lasta, was occupied by a still larger body of rebels, and, therefore, necessary to be immediately stormed, else those below were in imminent danger of being dashed to pieces by the large stones rolled down upon them. The prince divided his army into two parties, exhorting them, without loss of time, to attack that post; but the rebels, seeing the good countenance with which they attended,

cended, forsook their station and fled ; so that this second mountain was gained with much less loss and difficulty than the first.

Behind this, and higher than all the rest, appeared the third, which struck the assailants at first with terror and despair. This was carried with still less loss on the part of the prince, because he was assisted by the Inaches and Portuguese, who cut off the communication below, and hindered one mountain from succouring the other. Here they found great store of arms, offensive and defensive ; coats of mail, mules, and kettle drums ; and they penetrated to the head-quarters of Melca Christos, which was a small mountain, but very strong in situation, where a Portuguese captain seized the seat which served as a throne to the rebel ; and, had not they lost time by falling to plunder, they would have taken Melca Christos himself, who with difficulty escaped, accompanied by ten horse.

To this last mountain Socinios repaired with the prince, and they were joined by the governors of Amhara and Tigre, who had forced their way in from the opposite side.

Hitherto all had gone well with the king ; but when he had detached Guebra Christos, governor of Begemder, with the Inaches and Portuguese, who were at some distance, to destroy the crop, the mountaineers, again assembled on a high hill above them, saw their opportunity, and fell suddenly upon the spoilers, and cut all the soldiers of Begemder to pieces. A considerable part of the Inaches fell also ; but the rest, joining themselves with the
Portuguese

Portuguese in one body, made good their retreat to the head-quarters.

The destruction of the corn everywhere around them, and the impossibility of bringing provisions there, as they were situated in the midst of their enemies, obliged the king to think of returning before the rebels should collect themselves, and cut off his retreat. And it was with great difficulty, and still greater loss, he accomplished this, and retired to Dancaz, abandoning Lasta as soon as he had subdued it, but leaving Begemder almost a prey to the rebels whom he had conquered in Lasta.

Socinius being now determined upon another campaign again Lasta, and for the relief of Begemder, ordered his troops to hold themselves in readiness to march as soon as the weather should permit. But an universal discontent had seized the whole army. They saw no end to this war, nor any repose from its victories obtained with great bloodshed, without spoil, riches, or reward; no territory acquired to the king, nor nation subdued; but the time, when they were not actually in the field, filled up with executions and the constant effusion of civil blood, that seemed to be more horrid than war itself. They, therefore, positively refused to march against Lasta; and the prince was deputed by them to inform the king, that they did not say the Roman faith was a bad one, as they did not understand it, nor desire to be instructed; that this was an affair which entirely regarded themselves, and no one would pretend to say there was any merit in professing a religion they did not understand

stand or believe: that they were ready, however, to march and lay down their lives for the king and common weal, provided he restored them their ancient religion, without which they would have no concern in the quarrel, nor even wish to be conquerors. Whether the king was really in the secret or not, I shall not say; but it is expressly mentioned in the annals of his reign, that Socinius did promise by his son to the army, that he would restore the Alexandrian faith, if he should return victorious over Lafta; and the sudden manner in which he executed this, must convince every other person that it was so.

The army now marched from Dancaz, upon intelligence arriving that the rebels had left their strong-holds in Lafta, and were in their way to the capital to give the king battle there. It was the 26th of July 1631 the king discovered, by his scouts, that the rebel Melca Christos was at hand, having with him an army of about 25,000 men. Upon this intelligence he ordered his troops to halt, and hear mass from Diego de Mattos; and, having chosen his ground, he halted again at mid-day, and confessed, according to the rite of the church of Rome, and then formed his troops in order of battle.

It was not long till the enemy came in fight, but without shewing that alacrity and desire of engaging they used to do when in their native mountains. The king, at the head of the cavalry, fell so suddenly and so violently upon them, that he broke through the van-guard commanded by Melca Christos, and put them to flight before his foot could

could come up. The rest of the army followed the example of the leader, and the enemy were every where trodden down and destroyed by the victorious horse, till night put an end to the pursuit.

Melca Christos, in the beginning of the engagement, saved himself by the swiftness of his horse; but 8000 of the mountaineers were slain upon the spot, among whom was Bicané, general to Melca Christos, an excellent officer both for council and the field, and several other considerable persons, as well inhabitants of Lasta as others, who had taken that side from dislike to the king and his measures.

Next morning the king went out with his son to see the field of battle, where the prince Facilidas is said to have spoke to this effect in name of the army: "These men, whom you see slaughtered on the ground, were neither Pagans nor Mahometans at whose death we should rejoice—they were Christians, lately your subjects and your countrymen, some of them your relations. This is not victory which is gained over ourselves. In killing these you drive the sword into your own entrails. How many men have you slaughtered? How many more have you to kill? We are become a proverb even among the Pagans and Moors for carrying on this war, and for apostatizing, as they say, from the faith of our ancestors."—The king heard this speech without reply, and returned manifestly disconsolate to Dancaz; though many times before he had feasted and triumphed for the gaining of a lesser victory.

After his arrival at Dancaz, he had a conference with the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, who, in a long

long speech, upbraided him with having deserted the Catholic faith at the time when the victory obtained by their prayers gave him an opportunity of establishing it. The king answered, with seeming indifference, that he had done every thing for the Catholic faith in his power; that he had shed the blood of thousands, and as much more was to be shed; and still he was uncertain if it would produce any effect; but that he should think of it, and send him his resolutions to morrow.

The next day Socinius made a declaration by Za Mariam to the patriarch, to this purport: "When we embraced the faith of Rome, we laboured for it with great diligence, but the people shewed no affection for it. Julius rebelled out of hatred against Sela Christos, under pretence of being defender of the ancient faith, and was slain, together with many of his followers. Gabriel did the same. Tecla Georgis, likewise, made a league to die for the Alexandrian faith, which he did, and many people with him. The same did Serca Christos the preceding year; and those peasants of Lasta fight for the same cause at this day. The faith of Rome is not a bad one; but the men of this country do not understand it. Let those that like it remain in that faith, in the same way as the Portuguese did in the time of Atzenaf Segued; let them eat and drink together, and let them marry the daughters of Abyssinians. As for those that are not inclined to the Roman faith, let them follow their ancient one as received from the church of Alexandria."

Upon this declaration, delivered by Za Mariam, the patriarch inquired if it came from the king.

Being

Being answered that it did ; after a little pause, he returned this answer by Emanuel Almeyda, “ That the patriarch understood that both religions should be permitted in the kingdom, and that the Alexandrians were to have every indulgence that could be wished by them, without violating the purity of the Catholic faith ; that, therefore, he had no difficulty of allowing the people of Lasta to live in the faith of their ancestors without alteration, as they had never embraced any other ; but as for those that had sworn to persist in the Catholic faith, and had received the communion in that church, by no means, without a grievous sin, could it be granted to them to renounce that faith in which they had deliberately sworn to live and die.”

The king upon this answer, which he understood well, and expected, only replied, “ What is to be done ? I have no longer the power of government in my own kingdom ;”—and immediately ordered a herald to make the following proclamation :—

“ Hear us ! hear us ! hear us ! First of all we gave you the Roman Catholic faith, as thinking it a good one ; but many people have died fighting against it, as Julius, Gabriel, Tecla Georgis, Serca Christos, and, lastly, these rude peasants of Lasta. Now, therefore, we restore to you the faith of your ancestors ; let your own priests say their mass in their own churches ; let the people have their own altars for the sacrament, and their own liturgy, and be happy. As for myself, I am now old and worn out with war and infirmities, and no longer capable of governing ; I name my son Facilidas to reign in my place.”

Thus,

Thus, in one day, fell the whole fabric of the Roman Catholic faith, and hierarchy of the church of Rome, in Abyffinia; first regularly established, as I must always think, by Peter Paez, in moderation, charity, perseverance, long-suffering, and peace; extended and maintained afterwards by blood and violence beyond what could be expected from heathens, and thrown down by an exertion of the civil power in its own defence, against the encroachments of priesthood and ecclesiastical tyranny, which plainly had no other view than, by annihilating the constitution under its native prince, to reduce Abyffinia to a Portuguese government, as had been the case with so many independent states in India already.

This proclamation was made on the 14th of June 1632. After this Socinios took no care of public affairs. He had been for a long time afflicted with various complaints, especially since the last campaign in Lasta; and affairs were now managed by prince Facilidas in his father's place, though he did not take upon him the title of King. Emana Christos, brother of Sela Christos, a steady Alexandrian, and Guebra Christos, were then made governors of Lasta and Begemder; but no steps were taken in this interval against the Jesuits.

On the 7th of September the king died, and was buried with great pomp, by his son Facilidas, in the church of Ganeta Jesus, which he himself had built, professing himself a Roman Catholic to the last. The Portuguese historians deny both his resignation of the crown, and his perseverance in the Roman Catholic faith to his death, but this apparently for their own purposes.

He was a prince remarkable for his strength of body ; of great courage and elevation of mind ; had early learned the exercise of arms, patience, perseverance, and every military virtue that could be acquired ; and had passed the first of his life as a private person, in the midst of hardships and dangers.

He is celebrated to this day in Abyssinia for a talent, which seems to be the gift of nature, that of choosing upon the first view the proper ground for the camp or battle, and embracing, in his own mind in a moment, all the advantages and disadvantages that could result from any particular part of it. This talent is particularly recorded in several short proverbs, or military adages, such as the following : “ Blind him first, or you shall never beat him.” This most material qualification seemed to have been in part transmitted to Ras Michael, the great general in my time, descended from Socinios by his mother ; and, by this superiority alone over the other commanders opposed to him, he is said to have been victorious in forty-three pitched battles.

Socinios embraced the Catholic religion from conviction, and studied it with great application, as far as his narrow means of instruction would allow him ; and there can be no doubt that, under the moderate conduct of Peter Paez, who converted him, he would have died a martyr for that religion ; and there seems as little reason to doubt, conscientious as he was, if he had been a young man he would have quitted it for the good of his country, and from his inability to suffer the tyranny of the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, and his
continual

continual encroachment upon civil government. Being, in the last years of his life, left without one soldier to draw his sword for the Catholic cause, he kept his religion, and abandoned his crown; and having been, it should seem, for some time convinced that the government of the church of Rome, in such hands as he left it, was incompatible with monarchy, he took no pains to change Facilidas's known sentiments, or to render him favourable to the Roman faith, or to name another of his sons to succeed him whom he found to be more so.

The Jesuits, considering only the catastrophe, and unmindful of the strenuous efforts made to establish their religion during his whole reign, have traduced his character as that of an apostate, for giving way to the universal demand of his people to have their ancient form of worship restored when his army had deserted him, and he himself was dying of old age. But every impartial man will admit, that the step he took of abdicating his sovereignty over a people who had abjured the religion he had introduced among them, was, in his circumstances, the noblest action of his life, and just the reverse of apostacy.

This resignation of the crown, and his tenacious persevering in the Catholic faith, together with the moderation of his son, the prince Facilidas, in appointing a regency to govern, rather than to mount the throne himself during his father's life, are three facts which we know to be true from the Abyssinian annals, and which the Jesuits have endeavoured to suppress, that they might the more easily blacken

blacken the character both of the father and the son.

They have pretended that it was the queen, and other ladies at court, who by their influence seduced the king from the Catholic religion. But Socinius was then past seventy, and the queen near sixty, and he had no other wives or mistresses. To judge, moreover, by his behaviour in the affair of Adera, sister to Tecla Georgis, the voice of the women at court seems to have no extraordinary weight with him. In a word, he never varied in his religion after he embraced that of Rome, but stedfastly adhered to it, when the pride and bad conduct of the Jesuits, its professors, had scarcely left another friend to it in the whole kingdom; and, therefore, the charge of apostacy is certainly an unmerited falsehood.

As it is plain the Portuguese, from the beginning, believed their religion could only be established by force, and were persuaded such means were lawful, the blame of so much bloodshed for so many years, and the total miscarriage of the whole scheme at last, lay at the door of their sovereign, the king of Spain and Portugal; who, having succeeded to his wish in his conquest of India, seems not to have had the same anxiety the patriarch had for the conversion of Abyssinia, nor even to have thought further of sending a body of troops with his priests to the succour of Socinius, whom he left to the prayers of Urban VIII. the merit of Ignatius Loyola, and the labours of his furious and fanatic disciples.

The first part of the life of ... was spent in ... where he received his education at ... and ...



