VARIOUS

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Содержание

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A CAMPAIGN IN TAKA

Feldzug von Sennaar nach Taka, Basa, und Beni-Amer, mit besonderem Hinblick auf die Völker von Bellad-Sudan.– [Campaign from Sennaar to Taka, Basa, and Beni-Amer; with a particular Glance at the Nations of Bellad-Sudan.] – Von Ferdinand Werne. Stuttgart: Königl. Hofbuchdruckerei. London: Williams and Norgate. 1851.

Africa, the least explored division of the globe's surface, and the best field for travellers of bold and enterprising character, has been the scene of three of the most remarkable books of their class that have appeared within the last ten years. We refer to Major Harris's narrative of his Ethiopian expedition – to the marvellous adventures of that modern Nimrod, Mr Gordon Cumming – to Mr Ferdinand Werne's strange and exciting account of his voyage up the White Nile. In our review of the last-named interesting and valuable work,[1] we mentioned that Mr Werne, previously to his expedition up the Nile, had been for several months in the Taka country, a region previously untrodden by Europeans, with an army commanded by Achmet Bascha, governor-general of the Egyptian province of Bellad-Sudan, who was operating against refractory tributaries. He has just published an account of this campaign, which afforded him, however, little opportunity of expatiating on well-contested battles, signal victories, or feats of heroic valour. On the other hand, his narrative abounds in striking incidents, in curious details of tribes and localities that have never before been described, and in perils and hardships not the less real and painful that they proceeded from no efforts of a resolute and formidable foe, but from the effects of a pernicious climate, and the caprice and negligence of a wilful and indolent commander.

It was early in 1840, and Mr Werne and his youngest brother Joseph had been resident for a whole year at Chartum, chief town of the province of Sudan, in the country of Sennaar. Chartum, it will be remembered by the readers of the "Expedition for the Discovery of the Sources of the White Nile," is situated at the confluence of the White and Blue streams, which, there uniting, flow northwards through Nubia and Egypt Proper to Cairo and the Mediterranean; and at Chartum it was that the two Wernes had beheld, in the previous November, the departure of the first expedition up Nile, which they were forbidden to join, and which met with little success. The elder Werne, whose portrait – that of a very determined-looking man, bearded, and in Oriental costume – is appended to the present volume, appears to have been adventurous and a rambler from his youth upwards. In 1822 he had served in Greece, and had now been for many years in Eastern lands. Joseph Werne, his youngest and favourite brother, had come to Egypt at his instigation, after taking at Berlin his degree as Doctor of Medicine, to study, before commencing practice, some of the extraordinary diseases indigenous in that noxious climate. Unfortunately, as recorded in Mr Werne's former work, this promising young man, who seems to have possessed in no small degree the enterprise, perseverance, and fortitude so remarkable in his brother, ultimately fell a victim to one of those fatal maladies whose investigation was the principal motive of his visit to Africa. The first meeting in Egypt of the two brothers was at Cairo; and of it a characteristic account is given by the elder, an impetuous, we

[1] *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. CCCXCIX., for January 1849.

might almost say a pugnacious man, tolerably prompt to take offence, and upon whom, as he himself says at page 67, the Egyptian climate had a violently irritating effect.

"Our meeting, at Guerra's tavern in Cairo, was so far remarkable, that my brother knew me immediately, whilst I took him for some impertinent Frenchman, disposed to make game of me, inasmuch as he, in the petulance of his joy, fixed his eyes upon me, measuring me from top to toe, and then laughed at the fury with which I rushed upon him, to call him to an account, and, if necessary, to have him out. We had not seen each other for eight years, during which he had grown into a man, and, moreover, his countenance had undergone a change, for, by a terrible cut, received in a duel, the muscle of risibility had been divided on one side, and the poor fellow could laugh only with half his face. In the first overpowering joy of our meeting in this distant quarter of the globe, we could not get the wine over our tongues, often as my Swiss friend De Salis (over whose cheeks the tears were chasing each other) and other acquaintances struck their glasses against ours, encouraging us to drink… I now abandoned the hamlet of Tura – situated in the desert, but near the Nile, about three leagues above Cairo, and whither I had retreated to do penance and to work at my travels – as well as my good friend Dr Schledehaus of Osnabruck, (then holding an appointment at the military school, now director of the marine hospital of Alexandria,) with whom my brother had studied at Bonn, and I hired a little house in the Esbekie Square in Cairo. After half an hour's examination, Joseph was appointed surgeon-major, with the rank of a Sakulagassi or captain, in the central hospital of Kasr-el-Ain, with a thousand piastres a month, and rations for a horse and four servants. Our views constantly directed to the interior of Africa, we suffered a few months to glide by in the old city of the Khalifs, dwelling together in delightful brotherly harmony. But our thirst for travelling was unslaked; to it I had sacrificed my appointment as chancellor of the Prussian Consulate at Alexandria; Joseph received his nomination as regimental surgeon to the 1st regiment in Sennaar, including that of physician to the central hospital at Chartum. Our friends were concerned for us on account of the dangerous climate, but, nevertheless, we sailed with good courage up the Nile, happy to escape from the noise of the city, and to be on our way to new scenes."

A stroke of the sun, received near the cataract of Ariman in Upper Nubia, and followed by ten days' delirium, soon convinced the younger Werne that his friends' anxiety on his behalf was not groundless. During the whole of their twelvemonth's stay at Chartum, they were mercilessly persecuted by intermittent fever, there most malignant, and under whose torturing and lowering attacks their sole consolation was that, as they never chanced both to be ill together, they were able alternately to nurse each other. At last, fearing that body or mind would succumb to these reiterated fever-fits, and the first expedition up the White Nile having, to their great disgust and disappointment, sailed without them, they made up their minds to quit for ever the pestiferous Chartum and the burning steppes of Bellad-Sudan. Whilst preparing for departure, they received a visit from the chief Cadi, who told them, over a glass of cardinal – administered by Dr Werne as medicine, to evade his Mahomedan scruples – that Effendina (Excellency) Achmet Bascha was well pleased with the brotherly love they manifested, taking care of each other in sickness, and that they would do well to pay their respects occasionally at the Divan. This communication was almost immediately followed by the arrival at Chartum of Dr Gand, physician to Abbas Bascha. This gentleman had been a comrade of Ferdinand Werne's in Greece, and he recommended the two brothers to Achmet, with whom he was intimate, in true Oriental style, as men of universal genius and perfect integrity, to whom he might intrust both his body and his soul. The consequence of this liberal encomium was, that Achmet fixed his eyes upon them to accompany him, in the capacity of confidential advisers, upon a projected campaign. Informed of this plan and of the advantages it included, the Wernes joyfully abandoned their proposed departure. Joseph was to be made house-physician to Achmet and his harem, as well as medical inspector of the whole province, in place of Soliman Effendi, (the renegade Baron di Pasquali of Palermo,) a notorious poisoner, in whose hands the Bascha did not consider himself safe. Ferdinand Werne, who had held the rank of captain in Greece, was made *bimbaschi* or major, and

was attached, as engineer, to Achmet's person, with good pay and many privileges. "At a later period he would have made me bey, if I – not on his account, for he was an enlightened Circassian, but on that of the Turkish jackasses – would have turned Mussulman. I laughed at this, and he said no more about it." Delighted to have secured the services of the two Germans, Achmet ordered it to be reported to his father-in-law, Mehemet Ali, for his approval, and took counsel with his new officers concerning the approaching campaign. Turk-like, he proposed commencing it in the rainy season. Mr Werne opposed this as likely to cost him half his army, the soldiers being exceedingly susceptible to rain, and advised the erection of blockhouses at certain points along the line of march where springs were to be found, to secure water for the troops. The Bascha thought this rather a roundabout mode of proceeding, held his men's lives very cheap, and boasted of his seven hundred dromedaries, every one of which, in case of need, could carry three soldiers. His counsellors were dismissed, with injunctions to secresy, and on their return home they found at their door, as a present from the Bascha, two beautiful dromedaries, tall, powerful, ready saddled for a march, and particularly adapted for a campaign, inasmuch as they started not when muskets were fired between their ears. A few days later, Mr Werne was sent for by Achmet, who, when the customary coffee had been taken, dismissed his attendants by a sign, and informed him, with a gloomy countenance, that the people of Taka refused to pay their *tulba*, or tribute. His predecessor, Churdschid Bascha, having marched into that country, had been totally defeated in a *chaaba*, or tract of forest. Since that time, Achmet mournfully declared, the tribes had not paid a single piastre, and he found himself grievously in want of money. So, instead of marching south-westward to Darfour, as he had intended, he would move north-eastward to Taka, chastise the stubborn insolvents, and replenish the coffers of the state. "Come with me," said he, to Mr Werne; "upon the march we shall all recover our health," (he also suffered from frequent and violent attacks of fever;) "yonder are water and forests, as in Germany and Circassia, and very high mountains." It mattered little to so restless and rambling a spirit as Mr Ferdinand Werne whether his route lay inland towards the Mountains of the Moon, or coastwards to the Red Sea. His brother was again sick, and spoke of leaving the country; but Mr Werne cheered him up, pointed out to him upon the map an imaginary duchy which he was to conquer in the approaching war, and revived an old plan of going to settle at Bagdad, there to practise as physician and apothecary. "We resolved, therefore, to take our passports with us, so that, if we chose, we might embark on the Red Sea. By this time I had seen through the Bascha, and I resolved to communicate to him an idea which I often, in the interest of these oppressed tribes, had revolved in my mind, namely, that he should place himself at their head, and renounce obedience to the Egyptian vampire. I did subsequently speak to him of the plan, and it might have been well and permanently carried out, had he not, instead of striving to win the confidence of the chiefs, tyrannised over them in every possible manner. Gold and regiments! was his motto."

Meanwhile the influential Dr Gand had fallen seriously ill, and was so afflicted with the irritability already referred to as a consequence of the climate, that no one could go near him but the two Wernes. He neglected Joseph's good advice to quit Chartum at once, put it off till it was too late, and died on his journey northwards. His body lay buried for a whole year in the sand of the desert; then his family, who were going to France, dug it up to take with them. Always a very thin man, little more than skin and bone, the burning sand had preserved him like a mummy. There was no change in his appearance; not a hair gone from his mustaches. Strange is the confusion and alternation of life and death in that ardent and unwholesome land of Nubia. To-day in full health, to-morrow prostrate with fever, from which you recover only to be again attacked. Dead, in twenty-four hours or less corruption is busy on the corpse; bury it promptly in the sand, and in twelve months you may disinter it, perfect as if embalmed. At Chartum, the very focus of disease, death, it might be thought, is sufficiently supplied by fever to need no other purveyors. Nevertheless poisoning seems a pretty common practice there. Life in Chartum is altogether, by Mr Werne's account, a most curious thing. During the preparations for the campaign, a Wurtemberg prince, Duke Paul William of Mergentheim,

arrived in the place, and was received with much pomp. "For the first time I saw the Bascha sit upon a chair; he was in full uniform, a red jacket adorned with gold, a great diamond crescent, and three brilliant stars upon his left breast, his sabre by his side." The prince, a fat good-humoured German, was considerably impressed by the state displayed, and left the presence with many obeisances. The next day he dined with the Bascha, whom he and the Wernes hoped to see squatted on the ground, and feeding with his fingers. They were disappointed; the table was arranged in European fashion; wine of various kinds was there, especially champagne, (which the servants, notwithstanding Werne's remonstrances, insisted on shaking before opening, and which consequently flew about the room in foaming fountains;) bumper-toasts were drunk; and the whole party, Franks and Turks, seem to have gradually risen into a glorious state of intoxication, during which they vowed eternal friendship to each other in all imaginable tongues; and the German prince declared he would make the campaign to Taka with the Bascha, draw out the plan, and overwhelm the enemy. This jovial meeting was followed by a quieter entertainment given by the Wernes to the prince, who declared he was travelling as a private gentleman, and wished to be treated accordingly; and then Soliman Effendi, the Sicilian renegade, made a respectful application for permission to invite the "*Altezza Tedesca*," for whom he had conceived a great liking. A passage from Mr Werne is here worth quoting, as showing the state of society at Chartum. "I communicated the invitation, with the remark that the Sicilian was notorious for his poisonings, but that I had less fear on his highness' account than on that of my brother, who was already designated to replace him in his post. The prince did not heed the danger; moreover, I had put myself on a peculiar footing with Soliman Effendi, and now told him plainly that he had better keep his vindictive manœuvres for others than us, for that my brother and I should go to dinner with loaded pistols in our pockets, and would shoot him through the head (*brucciare il cervello*) if one of us three felt as much as a belly-ache at his table. The dinner was served in the German fashion; all the guests came, except Vaissière (formerly a French captain, now a slave-dealer, with the cross of the legion of honour.) He would not trust Soliman, who was believed to have poisoned a favourite female-slave of his after a dispute they had about money matters. The dinner went off merrily and well. The duke changed his mind about going to Taka, but promised to join in the campaign on his return from Fàszogl, and bade me promise the Bascha in his name a crocodile-rifle and a hundred bottles of champagne."

Long and costly were the preparations for the march; the more so that Mr Werne and his brother, who saw gleaming in the distance the golden cupolas of Bagdad, desired to take all their baggage with them, and also sufficient stores for the campaign – not implicitly trusting to the Bascha's promise that his kitchen and table should be always at their service. Ten camels were needed to carry the brothers' baggage. One of their greatest troubles was to know how to dispose of their collection of beasts and birds. "The young maneless lion, our greatest joy, was dead – Soliman Effendi, who was afraid of him, having dared to poison him, as I learned, after the renegade's death, from one of our own people." But of birds there were a host; eagles, vultures, king-cranes, (*grus pavonina*, Linn.;) a snake-killing secretary, with his beautiful eagle head, long tail, and heron legs; strange varieties of water-fowl, many of which had been shot, but had had the pellets extracted and the wounds healed by the skill of Dr Werne; and last, but most beloved, "a pet black horn-bird, (*buceros abyss.* L.,) who hopped up to us when we called out 'Jack!' – who picked up with his long curved beak the pieces of meat that were thrown to him, tossed them into the air and caught them again, (whereat the Prince of Wurtemberg laughed till he held his sides,) because nature has provided him with too short a tongue; but who did not despise frogs and lizards, and who called us at daybreak with his persevering '*Hum, hum*,' until we roused ourselves and answered 'Jack.'" Their anxiety on account of their aviary was relieved by the Bascha's wife, who condescendingly offered to take charge of it during their absence. Mehemet Ali's daughter suffered dreadfully from ennui in dull, unwholesome Chartum, and reckoned on the birds and beasts as pastime and diversion. Thus, little by little, difficulties were overcome, and all was made ready for the march. A Bolognese doctor of medicine, named Bellotti,

and Dumont, a French apothecary, arrived at Chartum. They belonged to an Egyptian regiment, and must accompany it on the *chasua*.[2] Troops assembled in and around Chartum, the greater part of whose garrison, destined also to share in the campaign, were boated over to the right bank of the Blue Nile. Thence they were to march northwards to Damer – once a town, now a village amidst ruins – situated about three leagues above the place where the Atbara, a river that rises in Abyssinia, and flows north-westward through Sennaar, falls into the Nile. There the line of march changed its direction to the right, and took a tolerably straight route, but inclining a little to the south, in the direction of the Red Sea. The Bascha went by water down the Nile the greater part of the way to Damer, and was of course attended by his physician. Mr Werne, finding himself unwell, followed his example, sending their twelve camels by land, and accompanied by Bellotti, Dumont, and a Savoyard merchant from Chartum, Bruno Rollet by name. There was great difficulty in getting a vessel, all having been taken for the transport of provisions and military stores; but at last one was discovered, sunk by its owner to save it from the commissariat, and after eleven days of sickness, suffering, and peril – during which Mr Werne, when burning with fever, had been compelled to jump overboard to push the heavy laden boat off the reef on which the stupid Rëis had run it – the party rejoined headquarters. There Mr Werne was kindly received by Achmet, and most joyfully by his brother. Long and dolorous was the tale Dr Joseph had to tell of his sufferings with the wild-riding Bascha. Three days before reaching Damer, that impatient chieftain left his ship and ordered out the dromedaries. The Berlin doctor of medicine felt his heart sink within him; he had never yet ascended a dromedary's saddle, and the desperate riding of the Bascha made his own Turkish retinue fear to follow him. His forebodings were well-founded. Two hours' rough trot shook up his interior to such an extent, and so stripped his exterior of skin, that he was compelled to dismount and lie down upon some brushwood near the Nile, exposed to the burning sun, and with a compassionate Bedouin for sole attendant, until the servants and baggage came up. Headache, vomiting, terrible heat and parching thirst – for he had no drinking vessel, and the Bedouin would not leave him – were his portion the whole day, followed by fever and delirium during the night. At two o'clock the next day (the hottest time) the Bascha was again in the saddle, as if desirous to try to the utmost his own endurance and that of his suite. By this time the doctor had come up with him, (having felt himself better in the morning,) after a six hours' ride, and terrible loss of leather, the blood running down into his stockings. Partly on his dromedary, partly on foot, he managed to follow his leader through this second day's march, at the cost of another night's fever, but in the morning he was so weak that he was obliged to take boat and complete his journey to Damer by water. Of more slender frame and delicate complexion than his brother, the poor doctor was evidently ill-adapted for roughing it in African deserts, although his pluck and fortitude went far towards supplying his physical deficiencies. Most painful are the accounts of his constantly recurring sufferings during that arduous expedition; and one cannot but admire and wonder at the zeal for science, or ardent thirst for novelty, that supported him, and induced him to persevere in the teeth of such hardship and ill-health. At Damer he purchased a small dromedary of easy paces, and left the Bascha's rough-trotting gift for his brother's riding.

At three in the afternoon of the 20th March, a cannon-shot gave the signal for departure. The Wernes' water-skins were already filled and their baggage packed; in an instant their tents were struck and camels loaded; with baggage and servants they took their place at the head of the column and rode up to the Bascha, who was halted to the east of Damer, with his beautiful horses and dromedaries standing saddled behind him. He complained of the great disorder in the camp, but consoled himself with the reflection that things would go better by-and-by. "It was truly a motley scene," says Mr Werne. "The Turkish cavalry in their national costume of many colours, with yellow and green

[2] "The word *chasua* signifies an expedition along the frontier, or rather *across* the frontier, for the capture of men and beasts. These slave-hunts are said to have been first introduced here by the Turks, and the word chasua is not believed to be indigenous, since for war and battle are otherwise used *harba* (properly a lance) and *schàmmata*. *Chasua* and *razzia* appear to be synonymous, corrupted from the Italian *cazzia*, in French *chasse*." —*Feldzug von Sennaar*, &c., p. 17.

banners and small kettle-drums; the Schaïgië and Mograbin horsemen; Bedouins on horseback, on camels, and on foot; the Schechs and Moluks (little king) with their armour-bearers behind them on the dromedaries, carrying pikes and lances, straight swords and leather shields; the countless donkeys and camels – the former led by a great portion of the infantry, to ride in turn – drums and an ear-splitting band of music, The Chabir (caravan-leader) was seen in the distance mounted on his dromedary, and armed with a lance and round shield; the Bascha bestrode his horse, and we accompanied him in that direction, whilst gradually, and in picturesque disorder, the detachments emerged from the monstrous confusion and followed us. The artillery consisted of two field-pieces, drawn by camels, which the Bascha had had broken to the work, that in the desert they might relieve the customary team of mules.

"Abd-el-Kader, the jovial Topschi Baschi, (chief of the artillery,) commanded them, and rode a mule. The Turks, (that is to say, chiefly Circassians, Kurds, and Arnauts or Albanians,) who shortly before could hardly put one leg before the other, seemed transformed into new men, as they once more found themselves at home in their saddles. They galloped round the Bascha like madmen, riding their horses as mercilessly as if they had been drunk with opium. This was a sort of honorary demonstration, intended to indicate to their chief their untameable valour. The road led through the desert, and was tolerably well beaten. Towards evening the Bascha rode forwards with the Chabir. We did not follow, for I felt myself unwell. It was dark night when we reached the left bank of the Atbara, where we threw ourselves down amongst the bushes, and went to sleep, without taking supper."

The campaign might now be said to be beginning; at least the army was close upon tribes whose disposition, if not avowedly hostile, was very equivocal, and the Bascha placed a picket of forty men at the only ford over the Atbara, a clear stream of tolerable depth, and with lofty banks, covered with rich grass, with mimosas and lofty fruit-laden palm-trees. The next day's march was a severe one – ten hours without a halt – and was attended, after nightfall, with some danger, arising partly from the route lying through trees with barbed thorns, strong enough to tear the clothes off men's bodies and the eyes out of their heads, and partly from the crowding and pressure in the disorderly column during its progress amongst holes and chasms occasioned by the overflowing of the river. Upon halting, at midnight, a fire was lighted for the Bascha, and one of his attendants brought coffee to Mr Werne; but he, sick and weary, rejected it, and would have preferred, he says, so thoroughly exhausted did he feel, a nap under a bush to a supper upon a roasted angel. They were still ascending the bank of the Atbara, a winding stream, with wildly beautiful tree-fringed banks, containing few fish, but giving shelter, in its deep places, to the crocodile and hippopotamus. From the clefts of its sandstone bed, then partially exposed by the decline of the waters, sprang a lovely species of willow, with beautiful green foliage and white umbelliferous flowers, having a perfume surpassing that of jasmine. The Wernes would gladly, have explored the neighbourhood; but the tremendous heat, and a warm wind which played round their temples with a sickening effect, drove them into camp. Gunfire was at noon upon that day; but it was Mr Werne's turn to be on the sick-list. Suddenly he felt himself so ill, that it was with a sort of despairing horror he saw the tent struck from over him, loaded upon a camel, and driven off. In vain he endeavoured to rise; the sun seemed to dart coals of fire upon his head. His brother and servant carried him into the shadow of a neighbouring palm-tree, and he sank half-dead upon the glowing sand. It would suffice to abide there during the heat of the day, as they thought, but instead of that, they were compelled to remain till next morning, Werne suffering terribly from dysentery. "Never in my life," he says, "did I more ardently long for the setting of the sun than on that day; even its last rays exercised the same painful power on my hair, which seemed to be in a sort of electric connection with just as many sunbeams, and to bristle up upon my head. And no sooner had the luminary which inspired me with such horror sunk below the horizon, than I felt myself better, and was able to get on my legs and crawl slowly about. Some good-natured Arab shepherd-lads approached our fire, pitied me, and brought me milk and durra-bread. It was a lovely evening; the full moon was reflected in the Atbara, as were also the dark crowns of the palm-trees,

wild geese shrieked around us; otherwise the stillness was unbroken, save at intervals by the cooing of doves. There is something beautiful in sleeping in the open air, when weather and climate are suitable. We awoke before sunrise, comforted, and got upon our dromedaries; but after a couple of hours' ride we mistrusted the sun, and halted with some wandering Arabs belonging to the Kabyle of the Kammarabs. We were hospitably received, and regaled with milk and bread."[3]

When our two Germans rejoined headquarters, after four days' absence, they found Achmet Bascha seated in the shade upon the ground in front of his tent, much burned by the sun, and looking fagged and suffering – as well he might be after the heat and exposure he had voluntarily undergone. Nothing could cure him, however, at least as yet, of his fancy for marching in the heat of the day. Although obstinate and despotic, the Bascha was evidently a dashing sort of fellow, well calculated to win the respect and admiration of his wild and heterogeneous army. Weary as were the two Wernes, (they reached the camp at noon,) at two o'clock they had to be again in the saddle. "A number of gazelles were started; the Bascha seized a gun and dashed after them upon his Arabian stallion, almost the whole of the cavalry scouring after him like a wild mob, and we ourselves riding a sharp trot to witness the chase. We thought he had fallen from his horse, so suddenly did he swing himself from saddle to ground, killing three gazelles with three shots, of which animals we consumed a considerable portion roasted for that night's supper." The river here widened, and crocodiles showed themselves upon the opposite shore. The day was terribly warm; the poor medico was ill again, suffering grievously from his head, and complaining of *his hair being so hot*; and as the Salamander Bascha persisted in marching under a sun which, through the canvass of the tents, heated sabres and musket-barrels till it was scarcely possible to grasp them, the brothers again lingered behind and followed in the cool of the evening, Joseph being mounted upon an easy-going mule lent him by Topschi Baschi, the good-humoured but dissolute captain of the guns. They were now divided but by the river's breadth from the hostile tribe of the Haddenda, and might at any moment be assailed; so two hours after sunset a halt was called and numerous camp-fires were lighted, producing a most picturesque effect amongst the trees, and by their illumination of the diversified costumes of the soldiery, and attracting a whole regiment of scorpions, "some of them remarkably fine specimens," says Mr Werne, who looks upon these unpleasant fireside companions with a scientific eye, "a finger and a half long, of a light colour, half of the tail of a brown black and covered with hair." It is a thousand pities that the adventurous Mrs Ida Pfeiffer did not accompany Mr Werne upon this expedition. She would have had the finest possible opportunities of curing herself of the prejudice which it will be remembered she was so weak as to entertain against the scorpion tribe. These pleasant reptiles were as plentiful all along Mr Werne's line of march as are cockchafers on a summer evening in an English oak-copse. Their visitations were pleasantly varied by those of snakes of all sizes, and of various degrees of venom. "At last," says Mr Werne, "one gets somewhat indifferent about scorpions and other wild animals." He had greater difficulty in accustoming himself to the sociable habits of the snakes, who used to glide about amongst tents and baggage, and by whom, in the course of the expedition, a great number of persons were bitten. On the 12th April "Mohammed Ladham sent us a remarkable scorpion – pity that it is so much injured – almost two fingers long, black-brown, tail and feet covered with prickly hair, claws as large as those of a small crab… We had laid us down under a green tree beside a cotton plantation, whilst our servants unloaded the camels and pitched the tents, when a snake, six feet long, darted from under our carpet, passed over my leg, and close before my brother's face. But we were so exhausted that we lay still, and some time afterwards the snake was brought to us, one of Schech Defalla's people having killed it." About noon next day a

[3] These Kammarabs possess a tract on the left or south bank of the Atbara. The distribution of the different tribes, as well as the line of march and other particulars, are very clearly displayed in the appropriate little map accompanying Mr Werne's volume. Opposite to the Kammarabs, "on the right bank of the Atbara, are the Anafidabs, of the race or family of the Bischari. They form a Kabyle (band or community) under a Schech of their own. How it is that the French in Algiers persist in using *Kabyle* as the proper name of a nation and a country, I cannot understand." —*Feldzug von Sennaar*, p. 32.

similar snake sprang out of the said Defalla's own tent; it was killed also, and found to measure six feet two inches. The soldiers perceiving that the German physician and his brother were curious in the matter of reptiles, brought them masses of serpents; but they had got a notion that the flesh was the part coveted (not the skin) to make medicine, and most of the specimens were so defaced as to be valueless. Early in May "some soldiers assured us they had seen in the thicket a serpent twenty feet long, and as thick as a man's leg; probably a species of boa – a pity that they could not kill it. The great number of serpents with dangerous bites makes our bivouac very unsafe, and we cannot encamp with any feeling of security near bushes or amongst brushwood; the prick of a blade of straw, the sting of the smallest insect, causes a hasty movement, for one immediately fancies it is a snake or scorpion; and when out shooting, one's *second* glance is for the game, one's *first* on the ground at his feet, for fear of trampling and irritating some venomous reptile." As we proceed through the volume we shall come to other accounts of beasts and reptiles, so remarkable as really almost to reconcile us to the possibility of some of the zoological marvels narrated by the Yankee Doctor Mayo in his rhapsody of Kaloolah.[4] For the present we must revert to the business of this curiously-conducted campaign. As the army advanced, various chiefs presented themselves, with retinues more or less numerous. The first of these was the Grand-Shech Mohammed Defalla, already named, who came up, with a great following, on the 28th March. He was a man of herculean frame; and assuredly such was very necessary to enable him to endure in that climate the weight of his defensive arms. He wore a double shirt of mail over a quilted doublet, arm-plates and beautifully wrought steel gauntlets; his casque fitted like a shell to the upper part of his head, and had in front, in lieu of a visor, an iron bar coming down over the nose – behind, for the protection of the nape, a fringe composed of small rings. His straight-bladed sword had a golden hilt. The whole equipment, which seems to correspond very closely with that of some of the Sikhs or other warlike Indian tribes, proceeded from India, and Defalla had forty or fifty such suits of arms. About the same time with him, arrived two Schechs from the refractory land of Taka, tall handsome men; whilst, from the environs of the neighbouring town of Gos-Rajeb, a number of people rode out on dromedaries to meet the Bascha, their hair quite white with camel-fat, which melted in the sun and streamed over their backs. Gos-Rajeb, situated at about a quarter of a mile from the left bank of the Atbara, consists of some two hundred *tokul* (huts) and clay-built houses, and in those parts is considered an important commercial depot, Indian goods being transported thither on camels from the port of Souakim, on the Red Sea. The inhabitants are of various tribes, more of them red than black or brown; but few were visible, many having fled at the approach of Achmet's army, which passed the town in imposing array – the infantry in double column in the centre, the Turkish cavalry on the right, the Schaïgiës and Mograbins on the left, the artillery, with kettledrums, cymbals, and other music, in the van – marched through the Atbara, there very shallow, and encamped on the right bank, in a stony and almost treeless plain, at the foot of two rocky hills. The Bascha ordered the Shech of Gos-Rajeb to act as guide to the Wernes in their examination of the vicinity, and to afford them all the information in his power. The most remarkable spot to which he conducted them was to the site of an ancient city, which once, according to tradition, had been as large as Cairo, and inhabited by Christians. The date of its existence must be very remote, for the ground was smooth, and the sole trace of buildings consisted in a few heaps of broken bricks. There were indications of a terrible conflagration, the bricks in one place being melted together into a black glazed mass. Mr Werne could trace nothing satisfactory with respect to former Christian occupants, and seems disposed to think that Burckhardt, who speaks of Christian monuments at that spot, (in the neighbourhood of the hill of Herrerem,) may have been misled by certain peculiarly formed rocks.

The most renowned chief of the mutinous tribes of Taka, the conqueror of the Turks under Churdschid Bascha, was Mohammed Din, Grand-Schech of the Haddenda. This personage, awed by the approach of Achmet's formidable force, sent his son to the advancing Bascha, as a hostage for his

[4] *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. CCCCIV., for June 1849.

loyalty and submission. Achmet sent the young man back to his father as bearer of his commands. The next day the army crossed the frontier of Taka, which is not very exactly defined, left the Atbara in their rear, and, moving still eastwards, beheld before them, in the far distance, the blue mountains of Abyssinia. The Bascha's suite was now swelled by the arrival of numerous Schechs, great and small, with their esquires and attendants. The route lay through a thick forest, interwoven with creeping plants and underwood, and with thorny mimosas, which grew to a great height. The path was narrow, the confusion of the march inconceivably great and perilous, and if the enemy had made a vigorous attack with their javelins, which they are skilled in throwing, the army must have endured great loss, with scarcely a possibility of inflicting any. At last the scattered column reached an open space, covered with grass, and intersected with deep narrow rills of water. The Bascha, who had outstripped his troops, was comfortably encamped, heedless of their fate, whilst they continued for a long time to emerge in broken parties from the wood. Mr Werne's good opinion of his generalship had been already much impaired, and this example of true Turkish indolence, and of the absence of any sort of military dispositions under such critical circumstances, completely destroyed it. The next day there was some appearance of establishing camp-guards, and of taking due precautions against the fierce and numerous foe, who on former occasions had thrice defeated Turkish armies, and from whom an attack might at any moment be expected. In the afternoon an alarm was given; the Bascha, a good soldier, although a bad general, was in the saddle in an instant, and galloping to the spot, followed by all his cavalry, whilst the infantry rushed confusedly in the same direction. The uproar had arisen, however, not from Arab assailants, but from some soldiers who had discovered extensive corn magazines —*silos*, as they are called in Algeria – holes in the ground, filled with grain, and carefully covered over. By the Bascha's permission, the soldiers helped themselves from these abundant granaries, and thus the army found itself provided with corn for the next two months. In the course of the disorderly distribution, or rather scramble, occurred a little fight between the Schaïgië, a quarrelsome set of irregulars, and some of the Turks. Nothing could be worse than the discipline of Achmet's host. The Schaïgiës were active and daring horsemen, and were the first to draw blood in the campaign, in a skirmish upon the following day with some ambushed Arabs. The neighbouring woods swarmed with these javelin-bearing gentry, although they lay close, and rarely showed themselves, save when they could inflict injury at small risk. Mr Werne began to doubt the possibility of any extensive or effectual operations against these wild and wandering tribes, who, on the approach of the army, loaded their goods on camels, and fled into the *Chaaba*, or forest district, whither it was impossible to follow them. Where was the Bascha to find money and food for the support of his numerous army? – where was he to quarter it during the dangerous *Chariff*, or rainy season? He was very reserved as to his plans; probably, according to Mr Werne, because he had none. The Schechs who had joined and marched with him could hardly be depended upon, when it was borne in mind that they, formerly the independent rulers of a free people, had been despoiled of their power and privileges, and were now the ill-used vassals of the haughty and stupid Turks, who overwhelmed them with imposts, treated them contemptuously, and even subjected them to the bastinado. "Mohammed Din, seeing the hard lot of these gentlemen, seems disposed to preserve his freedom as long as possible, or to sell it as dearly as may be. Should it come to a war, there is, upon our side, a total want of efficient leaders, at any rate if we except the Bascha. Abdin Aga, chief of the Turkish cavalry, a bloated Arnaut; Sorop Effendi, a model of stupidity and covetousness; Hassan Effendi Bimbaschi, a quiet sot; Soliman Aga, greedy, and without the slightest education of any kind; Hassan Effendi of Sennaar, a Turk in the true sense of the word (these four are infantry commanders); Mohammed Ladjam, a good-natured but inexperienced fellow, chief of the Mograbin cavalry: amongst all these officers, the only difference is, that each is more ignorant than his neighbour. With such leaders, what can be expected from an army that, for the most part, knows no discipline – the Schaïgiës, for instance, doing just what they please, and being in a fair way to corrupt all the rest – and that is encumbered with an endless train of dangerous rabble, idlers, slaves, and women of pleasure, serving

as a burthen and hindrance? Let us console ourselves with the *Allah kerim!* (God is merciful.)" Mr Werne had not long to wait for a specimen of Turkish military skill. On the night of the 7th April he was watching in his tent beside his grievously sick brother, when there suddenly arose an uproar in the camp, followed by firing. "I remained by our tent, for my brother was scarcely able to stir, and the infantry also remained quiet, trusting to their mounted comrades. But when I saw Bimbaschi Hassan Effendi lead a company past us, and madly begin to fire over the powder-waggons, as if these were meant to serve as barricades against the hostile lances, I ran up to him with my sabre drawn, and threatened him with the Bascha, as well as with the weapon, whereupon he came to his senses, and begged me not to betray him. The whole proved to be mere noise, but the harassed Bascha was again up and active. He seemed to make no use of his aides-de-camp, and only his own presence could inspire his troops with courage. Some of the enemy were killed, and there were many tracks of blood leading into the wood, although the firing had been at random in the darkness. As a specimen of the tactics of our Napoleon-worshipping Bascha, he allowed the wells, which were at two hundred yards from camp, to remain unguarded at night, so that they might easily have been filled up by the enemy. Truly fortunate was it that there were no great stones in the neighbourhood to choke them up, for we were totally without implements wherewith to have cleared them out again." Luckily for this most careless general and helpless army, the Arabs neglected to profit by their shortcomings, and on the 14th April, after many negotiations, the renowned Mohammed Din himself, awed, we must suppose, by the numerical strength of Achmet's troops, and over-estimating their real value, committed the fatal blunder of presenting himself in the Turkish camp. Great was the curiosity to see this redoubted chief, who alighted at Schech Defalla's tent, into which the soldiers impudently crowded, to get a view of the man before whom many of them had formerly trembled and fled. "Mohammed Din is of middle stature, and of a black-brown colour, like all his people; his countenance at first says little, but, on longer inspection, its expression is one of great cunning; his bald head is bare; his dress Arabian, with drawers of a fiery red colour. His retinue consists, without exception, of most ill-looking fellows, on whose countenances Nature seems to have done her best to express the faithless character attributed to the Haddenda. They are all above the middle height, and armed with shields and lances, or swords." Next morning Mr Werne saw the Bascha seated on his *angarèb*, (a sort of bedstead, composed of plaited strips of camel-hide, which, upon the march, served as a throne,) with a number of Shechs squatted upon the ground on either side of him, amongst them Mohammed Din, looking humbled, and as if half-repentant of his rash step. The Bascha appeared disposed to let him feel that he was now no better than a caged lion, whose claws the captor can cut at will. He showed him, however, marks of favour, gave him a red shawl for a turban, and a purple mantle with gold tassels, but no sabre, which Mr Werne thought a bad omen. The Schech was suffered to go to and fro between the camp and his own people, but under certain control – now with an escort of Schaïgiës, then leaving his son as hostage. He sent in some cattle and sheep as a present, and promised to bring the tribute due; this he failed to do, and a time was fixed to him and the other Shechs within which to pay up arrears. Notwithstanding the subjection of their chief, the Arabs continued their predatory practices, stealing camels from the camp, or taking them by force from the grooms who drove them out to pasture.

Mr Werne's book is a journal, written daily during the campaign but, owing to the long interval between its writing and publication, he has found it necessary to make frequent parenthetical additions, corrective or explanatory. Towards the end of April, during great sickness in camp, he writes as follows: – "My brother's medical observations and experiments begin to excite in me a strong interest. He has promised me that he will keep a medical journal; but he must first get into better health, for now it is always with sickening disgust that he returns from visiting his patients; he complains of the insupportable effluvia from these people, sinks upon his *angarèb* with depression depicted in his features, and falls asleep with open eyes, so that I often feel quite uneasy." Then comes the parenthesis of ten years' later date. "Subsequently, when I had joined the expedition for the navigation of the White Nile, he wrote to me from the camp of Kàssela-el-Lus to Chartum, that,

with great diligence and industry, he had written some valuable papers on African diseases, and was inconsolable at having lost them. He had been for ten days dangerously ill, had missed me sadly, and, in a fit of delirium, when his servant asked him for paper to light the fire, had handed him his manuscript, which the stupid fellow had forthwith burned. At the same time, he lamented that, during his illness, our little menagerie had been starved to death. The Bascha had been to see him, and by his order Topschi Baschi had taken charge of his money, that he might not be robbed, giving the servants what was needful for their keep, and for the purchase of flesh for the animals. The servants had drunk the money intended for the beasts' food. When my brother recovered his health, he had the *fagged*, (a sort of lynx,) which had held out longest, and was only just dead, cut open, and so convinced himself that it had died of hunger. The annoyance one has to endure from these people is beyond conception, and the very mildest-tempered man – as, for instance, my late brother – is compelled at times to make use of the whip."

Whilst Mohammed Din and the other Shechs, accompanied by detachments of Turkish troops, intended partly to support them in their demands, and partly to reconnoitre the country, endeavoured to get together the stipulated tribute, the army remained stationary. But repose did not entail monotony; strange incidents were of daily occurrence in this singular camp. The Wernes, always anxious for the increase of their cabinet of stuffed birds and beasts, sent their huntsman Abdallah with one of the detachments, remaining themselves, for the present at least, at headquarters, to collect whatever might come in their way. The commander of the Mograbins sent them an antelope as big as a donkey, having legs like a cow, and black twisted horns. From the natives little was to be obtained. They were very shy and ill-disposed, and could not be prevailed upon, even by tenfold payment, to supply the things most abundant with them, as for instance milk and honey. In hopes of alluring and conciliating them, the Bascha ordered those traders who had accompanied the army to establish a bazaar outside the fence enclosing the camp. The little mirrors that were there sold proved a great attraction. The Arabs would sit for whole days looking in them, and pulling faces. But no amount of reflection could render them amicable or honest: they continued to steal camels and asses whenever they could, and one of them caught a Schaigie's horse, led him up to the camp, and stabbed him to death. So great was the hatred of these tribes to their oppressors – a hatred which would have shown itself by graver aggressions, but for Achmet's large force, and above all, for their dread of firearms. Within the camp there was wild work enough at times. The good-hearted, hot-headed Werne was horribly scandalised by the ill-treatment of the slaves. Dumont, the French apothecary, had a poor lad named Amber, a mere boy, willing and industrious, whom he continually beat and kicked, until at last Mr Werne challenged him to a duel with sabres, and threatened to take away the slave, which he, as a Frenchman, had no legal right to possess. But this was nothing compared to the cruelties practised by other Europeans, and especially at Chartum by one Vigoureux, (a French corporal who had served under Napoleon, and was now adjutant of an Egyptian battalion,) and his wife, upon a poor black girl, only ten years of age, whom they first barbarously flogged, and then tied to a post, with her bleeding back exposed to the broiling sun. Informed of this atrocity by his brother, who had witnessed it, Mr Werne sprang from his sickbed, and flew to the rescue, armed with his sabre, and with a well-known iron stick, ten pounds in weight, which had earned him the nickname of Abu-Nabut, or Father of the Stick. A distant view of his incensed countenance sufficed, and the Frenchman, cowardly as cruel, hastened to release his victim, and to humble himself before her humane champion. Concerning this corporal and his dame, whom he had been to France to fetch, and who was brought to bed on camel-back, under a burning sun, in the midst of the desert, some curious reminiscences are set down in the *Feldzug*, as are also some diverting details of the improprieties of the dissipated gunner Topschi Baschi, who, on the 1st May, brought dancing-girls into the hut occupied by the two Germans, and assembled a mob round it by the indecorous nature of his proceedings. Regulations for the internal order and security of the camp were unheard of. After a time, tents were pitched over the ammunition; a ditch was dug around it, and strict orders were given to light no fire in its vicinity. All fires, too, by

command of the Bascha, were to be extinguished when the evening gun was fired. For a short time the orders were obeyed; then they were forgotten; fires were seen blazing late at night, and within fifteen paces of the powder. Nothing but the bastinado could give memory to these reckless fatalists. "I have often met ships upon the Nile, so laden with straw that there was scarcely room for the sailors to work the vessel. No matter for that; in the midst of the straw a mighty kitchen-fire was merrily blazing."

On the 6th of May, the two Wernes mounted their dromedaries and set off, attended by one servant, and with a guide provided by Mohammed Defalla, for the village of El Soffra, at a distance of two and a half leagues, where they expected to find Mohammed Din and a large assemblage of his tribe. It was rather a daring thing to advance thus unescorted into the land of the treacherous Haddendas, and the Bascha gave his consent unwillingly; but Mussa, (Moses,) the Din's only son, was hostage in the camp, and they deemed themselves safer alone than with the half company of soldiers Achmet wanted to send with them. Their route lay due east, at first through fields of *durra*, (a sort of grain,) afterwards through forests of saplings. The natives they met greeted them courteously, and they reached El Soffra without molestation, but there learned, to their considerable annoyance, that Mohammed Din had gone two leagues and a half farther, to the camp of his nephew Shech Mussa, at Mitkenàb. So, after a short pause, they again mounted their camels, and rode off, loaded with maledictions by the Arabs, because they would not remain and supply them with medicine, although the same Arabs refused to requite the drugs with so much as a cup of milk. They rode for more than half an hour before emerging from the straggling village, which was composed of wretched huts made of palm-mats, having an earthen cooking-vessel, a leathern water-bottle, and two stones for bruising corn, for sole furniture. The scanty dress of the people – some of the men had nothing but a leathern apron round their hips, and a sheep-skin, with the wool inwards, over their shoulders – their long hair and wild countenances, gave them the appearance of thorough savages. In the middle of every village was an open place, where the children played stark naked in the burning sun, their colour and their extraordinarily nimble movements combining, says Mr Werne, to give them the appearance of a troop of young imps. Infants, which in Europe would lie helpless in the cradle, are there seen rolling in the sand, with none to mind them, and playing with the young goats and other domestic animals. In that torrid climate, the development of the human frame is wonderfully rapid. Those women of whom the travellers caught a sight in this large village, which consisted of upwards of two thousand huts and tents, were nearly all old and ugly. The young ones, when they by chance encountered the strangers, covered their faces, and ran away. On the road to Mitkenàb, however, some young and rather handsome girls showed themselves. "They all looked at us with great wonder," says Mr Werne, "and took us for Turks, for we are the first Franks who have come into this country."

Mitkenàb, pleasantly situated amongst lofty trees, seemed to invite the wanderers to cool shelter from the mid-day sun. They were parched with thirst when they entered it, but not one of the inquisitive Arabs who crowded around them would attend to their request for a draught of milk or water. Here, however, was Mohammed Din, and with him a party of Schaïgiës under Melek Mahmud, whom they found encamped under a great old tree, with his fifty horsemen around him. After they had taken some refreshment, the Din came to pay them a visit. He refused to take the place offered him on an *angarèb*, but sat down upon the ground, giving them to understand, with a sneering smile, that *that* was now the proper place for him. "We had excellent opportunity to examine the physiognomy of this Schech, who is venerated like a demigod by all the Arabs between the Atbara and the Red Sea. 'He is a brave man,' they say, 'full of courage; there is no other like him!' His face is fat and round, with small grey-brown, piercing, treacherous-looking eyes, expressing both the cunning and the obstinacy of his character; his nose is well-proportioned and slightly flattened; his small mouth constantly wears a satirical scornful smile. But for this expression and his thievish glance, his bald crown and well-fed middle-sized person would become a monk's hood. He goes with his head bare, wears a white cotton shirt and *ferda*, and sandals on his feet… We told him that he was well known to the Franks as a great hero; he shook his head and said that on the salt lake, at Souakim, he had

seen great ships with cannon, but that he did not wish the help of the Inglèb (English;) then he said something else, which was not translated to us. I incautiously asked him, how numerous his nation was. 'Count the trees,' he replied, glancing ironically around him; (a poll-tax constituted a portion of the tribute.) Conversation through an interpreter was so wearisome that we soon took our leave." At Mitkenàb they were upon the borders of the great forest (Chaaba) that extends from the banks of the Atbara to the shores of the Red Sea. It contains comparatively few lofty trees – most of these getting uprooted by hurricanes, when the rainy season has softened the ground round their roots – but a vast deal of thicket and dense brushwood, affording shelter to legions of wild beasts; innumerable herds of elephants, rhinoceroses, lions, tigers, giraffes, various inferior beasts, and multitudes of serpents of the most venomous description. For fear of these unpleasant neighbours, no Arab at Mitkenàb quits his dwelling after nightfall. "When we returned to the wells, a little before sundown, we found all the Schaïgiës on the move, to take up their quarters in an enclosure outside the village, partly on account of the beasts of prey, especially the lions, which come down to drink of a night, partly for safety from the unfriendly Arabs. We went with them and encamped with Mammud in the middle of the enclosure. We slept soundly the night through, only once aroused by the hoarse cries of the hyenas, which were sneaking about the village, setting all the dogs barking. To insure our safety, Mohammed Din himself slept at our door – so well-disposed were his people towards us." A rumour had gained credit amongst the Arabs, that the two mysterious strangers were, sent by Achmet to reconnoitre the country for the Bascha's own advance; and so incensed were they at this, that, although their beloved chief's son was a hostage in the Turkish camp, it was only by taking bypaths, under guidance of a young relative of Schech Mussa's, that the Wernes were able to regain their camp in safety. A few days after their return they were both attacked by bad fever, which for some time prevented them from writing. They lost their reckoning, and thenceforward the journal is continued without dates.

The Bascha grew weary of life in camp, and pined after action. In vain did the Schaïgiës toss the djereed, and go through irregular tournaments and sham fights for his diversion; in vain did he rattle the dice with Topschi Baschi; vain were the blandishments of an Abyssinian beauty whom he had quartered in a hut surrounded with a high fence, and for whose amusement he not unfrequently had nocturnal serenades performed by the band of the 8th regiment; to which brassy and inharmonious challenge the six thousand donkeys assembled in camp never failed to respond by an ear-splitting bray, whilst the numerous camels bellowed a bass: despite all these amusements, the Bascha suffered from ennui. He was furious when he saw how slowly and scantily came in the tribute for which he had made this long halt. Some three hundred cows were all that had yet been delivered; a ridiculously small number contrasted with the vast herds possessed by those tribes. Achmet foamed with rage at this ungrateful return for his patience and consideration. He reproached the Schechs who were with him, and sent for Mohammed Din, Shech Mussa, and the two Shechs of Mitkenàb. Although their people, foreboding evil, endeavoured to dissuade them from obedience, they all four came and were forthwith put in irons and chained together. With all his cunning Mohammed Din had fallen into the snare. His plan had been, so Mr Werne believes, to cajole and detain the Turks by fair words and promises until the rainy season, when hunger and sickness would have proved his best allies. The Bascha had been beforehand with him, and the old marauder might now repent at leisure that he had not trusted to his impenetrable forests and to the javelins of his people, rather than to the word of a Turk. On the day of his arrest the usual evening gun was loaded with canister, and fired into the woods in the direction of the Haddendas, the sound of cannon inspiring the Arab and negro tribes with a panic fear. Firearms – to them incomprehensible weapons – have served more than anything else to daunt their courage. "When the Turks attacked a large and populous mountain near Faszogl, the blacks sent out spies to see how strong was the foe, and how armed. The spies came back laughing, and reported that there was no great number of men; that their sole arms were shining sticks upon their shoulders, and that they had neither swords, lances, nor shields. The poor fellows soon found how terrible an effect had the sticks they deemed so harmless. As they could not understand how it

was that small pieces of lead should wound and kill, a belief got abroad amongst them, that the Afrite, Scheitàn, (the devil or evil spirit,) dwelt in the musket-barrels. With this conviction, a negro, grasping a soldier's musket, put his hand over the mouth of the barrel, that the afrite might not get out. The soldier pulled the trigger, and the leaden devil pierced the poor black's hand and breast. After an action, a negro collected the muskets of six or seven slain soldiers, and joyfully carried them home, there to forge them into lances in the presence of a party of his friends. But it happened that some of them were loaded, and soon getting heated in the fire, they went off, scattering death and destruction around them." Most of the people in Taka run from the mere report of a musket, but the Arabs of Hedjàs, a mountainous district near the Red Sea, possess firearms, and are slow but very good shots.

In the way of tribute, nothing was gained by the imprisonment of Mahommed Din and his companions. No more contributions came in, and not an Arab showed himself upon the market-place outside the camp. Mohammed Din asked why his captors did not kill rather than confine him; he preferred death to captivity, and keeping him prisoner would lead, he said, to no result. The Arab chiefs in camp did not conceal their disgust at the Bascha's treatment of their Grand-Shech, and taxed Achmet with having broken his word, since he had given him the Amàhn – promise of pardon. Any possibility of conciliating the Arabs was destroyed by the step that had been taken. At night they swarmed round the camp, shrieking their war-cry. The utmost vigilance was necessary; a third of the infantry was under arms all night, the consequent fatigue increasing the amount of sickness. The general aspect of things was anything but cheering. The Wernes had their private causes of annoyance. Six of their camels, including the two excellent dromedaries given to them by the Bascha before quitting Chartum, were stolen whilst their camel-driver slept, and could not be recovered. They were compelled to buy others, and Mr Werne complains bitterly of the heavy expenses of the campaign – expenses greatly augmented by the sloth and dishonesty of their servants. The camel-driver, fearing to face his justly-incensed employers, disappeared and was no more heard of. Upon this and other occasions, Mr Werne was struck by the extraordinary skill of the Turks in tracing animals and men by their footsteps. In this manner his servants tracked his camels to an Arab village, although the road had been trampled by hundreds of beasts of the same sort. "If these people have once seen the footprint of a man, camel, horse, or ass, they are sure to recognise it amongst thousands of such impressions, and will follow the trail any distance, so long as the ground is tolerably favourable, and wind or rain has not obliterated the marks. In cases of loss, people send for a man who makes this kind of search his profession; they show him a footprint of the lost animal, and immediately, without asking any other indication, he follows the track through the streets of a town, daily trodden by thousands, and seldom falls to hunt out the game. He does not proceed slowly, or stoop to examine the ground, but his sharp eye follows the trail at a run. We ourselves saw the footstep of a runaway slave shown to one of these men, who caught the fugitive at the distance of three days' journey from that spot. My brother once went out of the Bascha's house at Chartum, to visit a patient who lived far off in the town. He had been gone an hour when the Bascha desired to see him, and the tschansch (orderly) traced him at once by his footmarks on the unpaved streets in which crowds had left similar signs. When, in consequence of my sickness, we lingered for some days on the Atbara, and then marched to overtake the army, the Schaïgiës who escorted us detected, amidst the hoof-marks of the seven or eight thousand donkeys accompanying the troops, those of a particular jackass belonging to one of their friends, and the event proved that they were right." Mr Werne fills his journal, during his long sojourn in camp, with a great deal of curious information concerning the habits and peculiarities of both Turks and Arabs, as well as with the interesting results of his observations on the brute creation. The soldiers continued to bring to him and his brother all manner of animals and reptiles – frogs, whole coils of snakes, and chameleons, which there abound, but whose changes of colour Mr Werne found to be much less numerous than is commonly believed. For two months he watched the variations of hue of these curious lizards, and found them limited to different shades of grey and green, with yellow stripes and spots. He made a great pet of a young wild cat, which was perfectly tame, and extraordinarily handsome. Its colour was

grey, beautifully spotted with black, like a panther; its head was smaller and more pointed than that of European cats; its ears, of unusual size, were black, with white stripes. Many of the people in camp took it to be a young tiger, but the natives called it a *fagged*, and said it was a sort of cat, in which Mr Werne agreed with them. "Its companion and playfellow is a rat, about the size of a squirrel, with a long silvery tail, which, when angry, it swells out, and sets up over its back. This poor little beast was brought to us with two broken legs, and we gave it to the cat, thinking it was near death. But the cat, not recognising her natural prey – and moreover feeling the want of a companion – and the rat, tamed by pain and cured by splints, became inseparable friends, ate together, and slept arm in arm. The rat, which was not ugly like our house rats, but was rather to be considered handsome, by reason of its long frizzled tail, never made use of its liberty to escape." Notwithstanding the numerous devices put in practice by the Wernes to pass their time, it at last began to hang heavy, and their pipes were almost their sole resource and consolation. Smoking is little customary in Egypt, except amongst the Turks and Arabs. The Mograbins prefer chewing. The blacks of the Gesira make a concentrated infusion of this weed, which they call *bucca*; take a mouthful of it, and roll the savoury liquor round their teeth for a quarter of an hour before ejecting it. They are so addicted to this practice, that they invite their friends to "bucca" as Europeans do to dinner. The vessel containing the tobacco juice makes the round of the party, and a profound silence ensues, broken only by the harmonious gurgle of the delectable fluid. Conversation is carried on by signs.

"We shall march to-morrow," had long been the daily assurance of those wiseacres, to be found in every army, who always know what the general means to do better than the general himself. At last the much-desired order was issued – of course when everybody least expected it – and, after a night of bustle and confusion, the army got into motion, in its usual disorderly array. Its destination was a mountain called Kassela-el-Lus, in the heart of the Taka country, whither the Bascha had sent stores of grain, and where he proposed passing the rainy season and founding a new town. The distance was about fourteen hours' march. The route led south-eastwards, at first through a level country, covered with boundless fields of tall *durra*. At the horizon, like a great blue cloud, rose the mountain of Kassela, a blessed sight to eyes that had long been weary of the monotonous level country. After a while the army got out of the durra-fields, and proceeded over a large plain scantily overgrown with grass, observing a certain degree of military order and discipline, in anticipation of an attempt, on the part of the angry Arabs, to rescue Mohammed Din and his companions in captivity. Numerous hares and jackals were started and ridden down. Even gazelles, swift as they are, were sometimes overtaken by the excellent Turkish horses. Presently the grass grew thicker and tall enough to conceal a small donkey, and they came to wooded tracts and jungles, and upon marks of elephants and other wild beasts. The foot-prints of the elephants, in places where the ground had been slightly softened by the rain, were often a foot deep, and from a foot and a half to two feet in length and breadth. Mr Werne regrets not obtaining a view of one of these giant brutes. The two-horned rhinoceros is also common in that region, and is said to be of extraordinary ferocity in its attacks upon men and beasts, and not unfrequently to come off conqueror in single combat with the elephant. "Suddenly the little Schaïgiës cavalry set up a great shouting, and every one handled his arms, anticipating an attack from the Arabs. But soon the cry of 'Asset! Asset!' (lion) was heard, and we gazed eagerly on every side, curious for the lion's appearance. The Bascha had already warned his chase-loving cavalry, under penalty of a thousand blows, not to quit their ranks on the appearance of wild beasts, for in that broken ground he feared disorder in the army and an attack from the enemy. I and my brother were at that moment with Melek Mahmud at the outward extremity of the left wing; suddenly a tolerably large lioness trotted out of a thicket beside us, not a hundred paces off. She seemed quite fearless, for she did not quicken her pace at sight of the army. The next minute a monstrous lion showed himself at the same spot, roaring frightfully, and apparently in great fury; his motions were still slower than those of his female; now and then he stood still to look at us, and after coming to within sixty or seventy paces – we all standing with our guns cocked, ready to receive him – he gave us a parting scowl, and

darted away, with great bounds, in the track of his wife. In a moment both had disappeared." Soon after this encounter, which startled and delighted Dr Werne, and made his brother's little dromedary dance with alarm, they reached the banks of the great *gohr*, (the bed of a river, filled only in the rainy season,) known as El Gasch, which intersects the countries of Taka and Basa. With very little daring and still less risk, the Haddendas, who are said to muster eighty thousand fighting men, might have annihilated the Bascha's army, as it wound its toilsome way for nearly a league along the dry water-course, (whose high banks were crowned with trees and thick bushes,) the camels stumbling and occasionally breaking their legs in the deep holes left by the feet of the elephants, where the cavalry could not have acted, and where every javelin must have told upon the disorderly groups of weary infantry. The Arabs either feared the firearms, or dreaded lest their attack should be the signal for the instant slaughter of their Grand-Shech, who rode, in the midst of the infantry, upon a donkey, which had been given him out of consideration for his age, whilst the three other prisoners were cruelly forced to perform the whole march on foot, with heavy chains on their necks and feet, and exposed to the jibes of the pitiless soldiery. On quitting the Gohr, the march was through trees and brushwood, and then through a sort of labyrinthine swamp, where horses and camels stumbled at every step, and where the Arabs again had a glorious opportunity, which they again neglected, of giving Achmet such a lesson as they had given to his predecessor in the Baschalik. The army now entered the country of the Hallengas, and a six days' halt succeeded to their long and painful march.

It would be of very little interest to trace the military operations of Achmet Bascha, which were altogether of the most contemptible description – consisting in the *chasuas*, or razzias already noticed, sudden and secret expeditions of bodies of armed men against defenceless tribes, whom they despoiled of their cattle and women. From his camp at the foot of Kassela-el-Lus, the Bascha directed many of these marauding parties, remaining himself safely in a large hut, which Mr Werne had had constructed for him, and usually cheating the men and officers, who had borne the fatigue and run the risk, out of their promised share of the booty. Sometimes the unfortunate natives, driven to the wall and rendered desperate by the cruelties of their oppressors, found courage for a stout resistance.

"An expedition took place to the mountains of Basa, and the troops brought back a large number of prisoners of both sexes. The men were almost all wounded, and showed great fortitude under the painful operation of extracting the balls. Even the Turks confessed that these mountaineers had made a gallant defence with lances and stones. Of our soldiers several had musket-shot wounds, inflicted by their comrades' disorderly fire. The Turks asserted that the Mograbins and Schaïgiës sometimes fired intentionally at the soldiers, to drive them from their booty. It was a piteous sight to see the prisoners – especially the women and children – brought into camp bound upon camels, and with despair in their countenances. Before they were sold or allotted, they were taken near the tent of Topschi Baschi, where a fire was kept burning, and were all, even to the smallest children, branded on the shoulder with a red-hot iron in the form of a star. When their moans and lamentations reached our hut, we took our guns and hastened away out shooting with three servants. These, notwithstanding our exhortations, would ramble from us, and we had got exceedingly angry with them for so doing, when suddenly we heard three shots, and proceeded in that direction, thinking it was they who had fired. Instead of them, we found three soldiers, lying upon the ground, bathed in their blood and terribly torn. Two were already dead, and the third, whose whole belly was ripped up, told us they had been attacked by a lion. The three shots brought up our servants, whom we made carry the survivor into camp, although my brother entertained slight hopes of saving him. The Bascha no sooner heard of the incident than he got on horseback with Soliman Kaschef and his people, to hunt the lion, and I accompanied him with my huntsman Sale, a bold fellow, who afterwards went with me up the White Nile. On reaching the spot where the lion had been, the Turks galloped off to seek him, and I and Sale alone remained behind. Suddenly I heard a heavy trampling, and a crashing amongst the bushes, and I saw close beside me an elephant with its calf. Sale, who was at some distance, and had just shot a parrot, called out to know if he should fire at the elephant, which I loudly forbade him to do.

The beast broke its way through the brushwood just at hand. I saw its high back, and took up a safe position amongst several palm-trees, which all grew from one root, and were so close together that the elephant could not get at me. Sale was already up a tree, and told me the elephant had turned round, and was going back into the chaaba. The brute seemed angry or anxious about its young one, for we found the ground dug up for a long distance by its tusk as by a plough. Some shots were fired, and we thought the Bascha and his horsemen were on the track of the lion, but they had seen the elephant, and formed a circle round it. A messenger galloped into camp, and in a twinkling the Arnaut Abdin Bey came up with part of his people. The elephant, assailed on all sides by a rain of bullets, charged first one horseman, then another; they delivered their fire and galloped off. The eyes were the point chiefly aimed at, and it soon was evident that he was blinded by the bullets, for when pursuing his foes he ran against the trees, the shock of his unwieldy mass shaking the fruit from the palms. The horsemen dismounted and formed a smaller circle around him. He must already have received some hundred bullets, and the ground over which he staggered was dyed red, when the Bascha crept quite near him, knelt down and sent a shot into his left eye, whereupon the colossus sank down upon his hinder end and died. Nothing was to be seen of the calf or of the lion, but a few days later a large male lion was killed by Soliman Kaschef's men, close to camp, where we often in the night-time heard the roaring of those brutes."

Just about this time bad news reached the Wernes. Their huntsman Abdallah, to whom they were much attached by reason of his gallantry and fidelity, had gone a long time before to the country of the Beni-Amers, eastward from Taka, in company of a Schaïgië chief, mounted on one of their best camels, armed with a double-barrelled gun, and provided with a considerable sum of money for the purchase of giraffes. On his way back to his employers, with a valuable collection of stuffed birds and other curiosities, he was barbarously murdered, when travelling, unescorted, through the Hallenga country, and plundered of all his baggage. Sale, who went to identify his friend's mutilated corpse, attributed the crime to the Hallengas. Mr Werne was disposed to suspect Mohammed Ehle, a great villain, whom the Bascha at times employed as a secret stabber and assassin. This Ehle had been appointed Schech of the Hallengas by the Divan, in lieu of the rightful Schech, who had refused submission to the Turks. Three nephews of Mohammed Din (one of them the same youth who had escorted the Wernes safely back to camp when they were in peril of their lives in the Haddenda country) came to visit their unfortunate relative, who was still a prisoner, cruelly treated, lying upon the damp earth, chained to two posts, and awaiting with fortitude the cruel death by impalement with which the Bascha threatened him. Achmet received the young men very coldly, and towards evening they set out, greatly depressed by their uncle's sad condition, upon their return homewards. Early next morning the Wernes, when out shooting, found the dead bodies of their three friends. They had been set upon and slain after a gallant defence, as was testified by their bloody lances, and by other signs of a severe struggle. The birds of prey had already picked out their eyes, and their corpses presented a frightful spectacle. The Wernes, convinced that this assassination had taken place by the Bascha's order, loaded the bodies on a camel, took them to Achmet, and preferred an accusation against the Hallengas for this shameful breach of hospitality. The Bascha's indifference confirmed their suspicions. He testified no indignation, but there was great excitement amongst his officers; and when they left the Divan, Mr Werne violently reproached Mohammed Ehle, whom he was well assured was the murderer, and who endured his anger in silence. "The Albanian Abdin Bey was so enraged that he was only withheld by the united persuasions of the other officers from mounting his horse and charging Mohammed Ehle with his wild Albanians, the consequence of which would inevitably have been a general mutiny against the Bascha, for the soldiers had long been murmuring at their bad food and ill treatment." The last hundred pages of Mr Werne's very closely printed and compendious volume abound in instances of the Bascha's treachery and cruelty, and of the retaliation exercised by the Arabs. On one occasion a party of fifty Turkish cavalry were murdered by the Haddendas, who had invited them to a feast. The town of Gos-Rajeb was burned,

twenty of the merchants there resident were killed, and the corn, stored there for the use of the army on its homeward march, was plundered. The Bascha had a long-cherished plan of cutting off the supply of water from the country of the Haddendas. This was to be done by damming up the Gohr-el-Gasch, and diverting the abundant stream which, in the rainy season, rushed along its deep gully, overflowing the tall banks and fertilising fields and forests. As the Bascha's engineer and confidential adviser, Mr Werne was compelled to direct this work. By the labour of thousands of men, extensive embankments were made, and the Haddendas began to feel the want of water, which had come down from the Abyssinian mountains, and already stood eight feet deep in the Gohr. Mr Werne repented his share in the cruel work, and purposely abstained from pressing the formation of a canal which was to carry off the superfluous water to the Atbara, there about three leagues distant from the Gohr. And one morning he was awakened by a great uproar in the camp, and by the shouts of the Bascha, who was on horseback before his hut, and he found that a party of Haddendas had thrashed a picket and made an opening in the dykes, which was the deathblow to Achmet's magnificent project of extracting an exorbitant tribute from Mohammed Din's tribe as the price of the supply of water essential to their very existence. The sole results of the cruel attempt were a fever to the Bascha, who had got wet, and the sickness of half the army, who had been compelled to work like galley-slaves under a burning sun and upon bad rations. The vicinity of Kassela is rich in curious birds and beasts. The mountain itself swarms with apes, and Mr Werne frequently saw groups of two or three hundred of them seated upon the cliffs. They are about the size of a large dog, with dark brown hair and hideous countenances. Awful was the screaming and howling they set up of a night, when they received the unwelcome visit of some hungry leopard or prowling panther. Once the Wernes went out with their guns for a day's sport amongst the monkeys, but were soon glad to beat a retreat under a tremendous shower of stones. Hassan, a Turk, who purveyed the brothers with hares, gazelles, and other savoury morsels, and who was a very good shot, promised to bring in – of course for good payment – not only a male and female monkey, but a whole camel-load if desired. He started off with this object, but did not again show himself for some days, and tried to sneak out of the Wernes' way when they at last met him in the bazaar. He had a hole in his head, and his shoulder badly hurt, and declared he would have nothing more to say to those *transformed men* upon the mountain. Mr Werne was very desirous to catch a monkey alive, but was unsuccessful, and Mohammed Ehle refused to sell a tame one which he owned, and which usually sat upon his hut. Mr Werne thinks them a variety of the Chimpanzee. They fight amongst themselves with sticks, and defend themselves fiercely with stones against the attacks of men. Upon the whole the Wernes were highly fortunate in collecting zoological and ornithological specimens, of which they subsequently sent a large number, stuffed, to the Berlin museum. They also secured several birds and animals alive; amongst these a young lion and a civet cat. Regarding reptiles they were very curious, and nothing of that kind was too long or too large for them. As Ferdinand Werne was sitting one day upon his dromedary, in company with the Bascha, on the left bank of the Gasch, the animals shied at a large serpent which suddenly darted by. The Bascha ordered the men who were working at the dykes to capture it, which they at once proceeded to do, as unconcernedly as an English haymaker would assail a hedge snake. "Pursued by several men, the serpent plunged into the water, out of which it then boldly reared its head, and confronted an Arab who had jumped in after it, armed with a *hassaie*. With extraordinary skill and daring the Arab approached it, his club uplifted, and struck it over the head, so that the serpent fell down stunned and writhing mightily; whereupon another Arab came up with a cord; the club-bearer, without further ceremony, griped the reptile by the throat, just below the head; the noose was made fast, and the pair of them dragged their prize on shore. There it lay for a moment motionless, and we contemplated the terribly beautiful creature, which was more than eleven feet long and half-a-foot in diameter. But when they began to drag it away, by which the skin would of course be completely spoiled, orders were given to *carry* it to camp. A jacket was tied over its head, and three men set to work to get it upon their shoulders; but the serpent made such violent convulsive movements that all three fell to the

ground with it, and the same thing occurred again when several others had gone to their assistance. I accompanied them into camp, drove a big nail into the foremost great beam of our *recuba*, (hut,) and had the monster suspended from it. He hung down quite limp, as did also several other snakes, which were still alive, and which our servants had suspended inside our hut, intending to skin them the next morning, as it was now nearly dark. In the night I felt a most uncomfortable sensation. One of the snakes, which was hung up at the head of my bed, had smeared his cold tail over my face. But I sprang to my feet in real alarm, and thought I had been struck over the shin with a club, when the big serpent, now in the death agony, gave me a wipe with its tail through the open door, in front of which our servants were squatted, telling each other ghost stories of snake-kings and the like… They called this serpent *assala*, which, however, is a name they give to all large serpents. Soon afterwards we caught another, as thick, but only nine feet long, and with a short tail, like the *Vipera cerastes*; and this was said to be of that breed of short, thick snakes which can devour a man." In the mountains of Basa, two days' journey from the Gohr-el-Gasch, and on the road thither, snakes are said to exist, of no great length, but as thick as a crocodile, and which can conveniently swallow a man; and instances were related to Mr Werne of these monsters having swallowed persons when they lay sleeping on their angarèbs. Sometimes the victims had been rescued *when only half gorged*! Of course travellers hear strange stories, and some of those related by Mr Werne are tolerably astounding; but these are derived from his Turkish, Egyptian, or Arabian acquaintances, and there is no appearance of exaggeration or romancing in anything which he narrates as having occurred to or been witnessed by himself. A wild tradition was told him of a country called Bellad-el-Kelb, which signifies the Country of Dogs, where the women were in all respects human, but where the men had faces like dogs, claws on their feet, and tails like monkeys. They could not speak, but carried on conversation by wagging their tails. This ludicrous account appeared explicable by the fact, that the men of Bellad-el-Kelb are great robbers, living by plunder, and, like fierce and hungry dogs, never relinquishing their prey.

The Hallengas, amongst whom the expedition now found itself, were far more frank and friendly, and much less wild, than the Haddendas and some other tribes, and they might probably have been converted into useful allies by a less cruel and capricious invader than the Bascha. But conciliation was no part of his scheme; if he one day caressed a tribe or a chief, it was only to betray them the next. Mr Werne was on good terms with some of the Hallenga sheiks, and went to visit the village of Hauathi, about three miles from camp, to see the birds of paradise which abounded there. On his road he saw from afar a great tree covered with those beautiful birds, and which glistened in the sunshine with all the colours of the rainbow. Some days later he and his brother went to drink *merissa*, a slightly intoxicating liquor, with one of the Fakis or priests of the country. The two Germans got very jovial, drinking to each other, student-fashion; and the faki, attempting to keep pace with them, got crying-drunk, and disclosed a well-matured plan for blowing up their powder-magazine. The ammunition had been stored in the village of Kadmin, which was a holy village, entirely inhabited by fakis. The Bascha had made sure that none of the natives would risk blowing up these holy men, even for the sake of destroying his ammunition, and he was unwilling to keep so large a quantity of powder amidst his numerous camp-fires and reckless soldiery. But the fakis had made their arrangements. On a certain night they were to depart, carrying away all their property into the great caverns of Mount Kassela, and fire was to be applied to the house that held the powder. Had the plot succeeded, the whole army was lost, isolated as it was in the midst of unfriendly tribes, embittered by its excesses, and by the aggressions and treachery of its chief, and who, stimulated by their priests, would in all probability have exterminated it to the last man, when it no longer had cartridges for its defence. The drunken faki's indiscretion saved Achmet and his troops; the village was forthwith surrounded, and the next day the ammunition was transferred to camp. Not to rouse the whole population against him, the Bascha abstained for the moment from punishing the conspirators, but he was not the man to let them escape altogether; and some time afterwards, Mr Werne, who had returned to Chartum,

received a letter from his brother, informing him that nine fakis had been hung on palm-trees just outside the camp, and that the magnanimous Achmet proposed treating forty more in the same way.

A mighty liar was Effendina Achmet Bascha, as ever ensnared a foe or broke faith with a friend. Greedy and cruel was he also, as only a Turkish despot can be. One of his most active and unscrupulous agents was a bloodsucker named Hassan Effendi, whom he sent to the country of the Beni-Amers to collect three thousand five hundred cows and thirteen hundred camels, the complement of their tribute. Although this tribe had upon the whole behaved very peaceably, Hassan's first act was to shoot down a couple of hundred of them like wild beasts. Then he seized a large number of camels belonging to the Haddendas, although the tribe was at that very time in friendly negotiation with the Bascha. The Haddendas revenged themselves by burning Gos-Rajeb. In proof of their valour, Hassan's men cut off the ears of the murdered Beni-Amers, and took them to Achmet, who gave them money for the trophies. "They had forced a slave to cut off the ears; yonder now lies the man – raving mad, and bound with cords. Camel-thieves, too – no matter to what tribe they belong – if caught *in flagranti*, lose their ears, for which the Bascha gives a reward. That many a man who never dreamed of committing a theft loses his ears in this way, is easy to understand, for the operation is performed on the spot." Dawson Borrer, in his *Campaign in the Kabylie*, mentions a very similar practice as prevailing in Marshal Bugeaud's camp, where ten francs was the fixed price for the head of a horse-stealer, it being left to the soldiers who severed the heads and received the money to discriminate between horse-stealers and honest men. Whether Bugeaud took a hint from the Bascha, or the Bascha was an admiring imitator of Bugeaud, remains a matter of doubt. "Besides many handsome women and children, Hassan Effendi brought in two thousand nine hundred cows, and seven thousand sheep." He might have been a French prince returning from a razzia. "For himself he kept eighty camels, *which he said he had bought*." A droll dog, this Hassan Effendi, but withal rather covetous – given to sell his soldier's rations, and to starve his servants, a single piastre – about twopence halfpenny – being his whole daily outlay for meat for his entire household, who lived for the most part upon durra and water. If his servants asked for wages, they received the bastinado. "The Bascha had given the poor camel-drivers sixteen cows. The vampire (Hassan) took upon himself to appropriate thirteen of them." Mr Werne reported this robbery to the Bascha, but Achmet merely replied "*malluch*" – signifying, "it matters not." When inferior officers received horses as their share of booty, Hassan bought them of them, but always forgot to pay, and the poor subalterns feared to complain to the Bascha, who favoured the rogue, and recommended him to the authorities at Cairo for promotion to the rank of Bey, because, as he told Mr Werne with an ironical smile, Hassan was getting very old and infirm, and when he died the Divan would bring charges against him, and inherit his wealth. Thus are things managed in Egypt. No wonder that, where such injustice and rascality prevail, many are found to rejoice at the prospect of a change of rulers. "News from Souakim (on the Red Sea) of the probable landing of the English, excite great interest in camp; from all sides they come to ask questions of us, thinking that we, as Franks, must know the intentions of the invaders. Upon the whole, they would not be displeased at such a change of government, particularly when we tell them of the good pay and treatment customary amongst the English; and that with them no officer has to endure indignities from his superiors in rank."

"I have now," says Mr Werne, (page 256,) "been more than half a year away from Chartum, continually in the field, and not once have I enjoyed the great comfort of reposing, undressed, between clean white sheets, but have invariably slept in my clothes, on the ground, or on the short but practical angarèb. All clean linen disappears, for the constant perspiration and chalky dust burns everything; and the servants do not understand washing, inasmuch as, contrasted with their black hides, everything appears white to them, and for the last three months no soap has been obtainable. And in the midst of this dirty existence, which drags itself along like a slow fever, suddenly 'Julla!' is the word, and one hangs for four or five days, eighty or a hundred leagues, upon the camel's back, every bone bruised by the rough motion, – the broiling sun, thirst, hunger, and cold, for constant companions. Man can

endure much: I have gone through far more than I ever thought I could, – vomiting and in a raging fever on the back of a dromedary, under a midday sun, more dead than alive, held upon my saddle by others, and yet I recovered. To have remained behind would have been to encounter certain death from the enemy, or from wild beasts. We have seen what a man can bear, under the pressure of necessity; in my present uniform and monotonous life I compare myself to the camels tied before my tent, which sometimes stand up, sometimes slowly stretch themselves on the ground, careless whether crows or ravens walk over their backs, constantly moving their jaws, looking up at the sun, and then, by way of a change, taking a mouthful of grass, but giving no signs of joy or curiosity."

From this state of languid indifference Mr Werne was suddenly and pleasurably roused by intelligence that a second expedition was fitting out for the White Nile. He and his brother immediately petitioned the Bascha for leave to accompany it. The desired permission was granted to him, but refused to his brother. There was too much sickness in the camp, the Bascha said; he could not spare his doctor, and lacked confidence in the Italian, Bellotti. The fondly-attached brothers were thus placed in a painful dilemma: they had hoped to pursue their wanderings hand in hand, and to pass their lives together, and loth indeed were they to sunder in those sickly and perilous regions. At last they made up their minds to the parting. It has been already recorded in Mr Werne's former work, how, within ten days of their next meeting, his beloved brother's eyes were closed in death.

In various respects, Mr Werne's *Feldzug* is one of the most curious books of travel and adventure that, for a very long time, has appeared. It has three points of particular attraction and originality. In the first place, the author wanders in a region previously unexplored by Christian and educated travellers, and amongst tribes whose bare names have reached the ears of but few Europeans. Secondly, he campaigns as officer in such an army as we can hardly realise in these days of high civilisation and strict military discipline, – so wild, motley, and grotesque are its customs, composition, and equipment, – an army whose savage warriors, strange practices, and barbarous cruelties, make us fancy ourselves in presence of some fierce Moslem horde of the middle ages, marching to the assault of Italy or Hungary. Thirdly, during his long sojourn in camp he had opportunities such as few ordinary travellers enjoy, and of which he diligently profited, to study and note down the characteristics and social habits of many of the races of men that make up the heterogeneous population of the Ottoman empire. Some of the physiological and medical details with which he favours us, would certainly have been more in their place in his brother's professional journal, than in a book intended for the public at large; and passages are not wanting at which the squeamish will be apt to lay down the volume in disgust. For such persons Mr Werne does not write; and his occasional indelicacy and too crude details are compensated, to our thinking, by his manly honest tone, and by the extraordinary amount of useful and curious information he has managed to pack into two hundred and seventy pages. As a whole, the *Expedition to the White Nile*, which contains a vast deal of dry meteorological and geographical detail, is decidedly far less attractive than the present book, which is as amusing as any romance. We have read it with absorbing interest, well pleased with the hint its author throws out at its close, that the records of his African wanderings are not yet all exhausted.

MY NOVEL; OR, VARIETIES IN ENGLISH LIFE

BY PISISTRATUS CAXTON

BOOK VII. – INITIAL CHAPTER

"What is courage?" said my uncle Roland, rousing himself from a reverie into which he had fallen after the Sixth Book in this history had been read to our family circle.

"What is courage?" he repeated more earnestly. "Is it insensibility to fear? *That* may be the mere accident of constitution; and, if so, there is no more merit in being courageous than in being this table."

"I am very glad to hear you speak thus," observed Mr Caxton, "for I should not like to consider myself a coward; yet I am very sensible to fear in all dangers, bodily and moral."

"La, Austin, how can you say so?" cried my mother, firing up; "was it not only last week that you faced the great bull that was rushing after Blanche and the children?"

Blanche at that recollection stole to my father's chair, and, hanging over his shoulder, kissed his forehead.

Mr Caxton, (sublimely unmoved by these flatteries.) – "I don't deny that I faced the bull, but I assert that I was horribly frightened."

Roland. – "The sense of honour which conquers fear is the true courage of chivalry: you could not run away when others were looking on – no gentleman could."

Mr Caxton. – "Fiddledee! It was not on my gentility that I stood, Captain. I should have run fast enough, if it had done any good. I stood upon my understanding. As the bull could run faster than I could, the only chance of escape was to make the brute as frightened as myself."

Blanche. – "Ah, you did not think of that; your only thought was to save me and the children."

Mr Caxton. – "Possibly, my dear – very possibly I might have been afraid for you too; – but I was very much afraid for myself. However, luckily I had the umbrella, and I sprang it up and spread it forth in the animal's stupid eyes, hurling at him simultaneously the biggest lines I could think of in the First Chorus of the 'Seven against Thebes.' I began with Eledemnas pedioploktupos; and when I came to the grand howl of Ἰώ, ἰώ, ἰώ, ἰώ – the beast stood appalled as at the roar of a lion. I shall never forget his amazed snort at the Greek. Then he kicked up his hind legs, and went bolt through the gap in the hedge. Thus, armed with Æschylus and the umbrella, I remained master of the field; but (continued Mr Caxton, ingenuously,) I should not like to go through that half minute again."

"No man would," said the Captain kindly. "I should be very sorry to face a bull myself, even with a bigger umbrella than yours, and even though I had Æschylus, and Homer to boot, at my fingers' ends."

Mr Caxton. – "You would not have minded if it had been a Frenchman with a sword in his hand?"

Captain. – "Of course not. Rather liked it than otherwise," he added grimly.

Mr Caxton. – "Yet many a Spanish matador, who doesn't care a button for a bull, would take to his heels at the first lunge *en carte* from a Frenchman. Therefore, in fact, if courage be a matter of constitution, it is also a matter of custom. We face calmly the dangers we are habituated to, and recoil from those of which we have no familiar experience. I doubt if Marshal Turenne himself would have been quite at his ease on the tight-rope; and a rope-dancer, who seems disposed to scale the heavens with Titanic temerity, might possibly object to charge on a cannon."

Captain Roland. – "Still, either this is not the courage I mean, or there is another kind of it. I mean by courage that which is the especial force and dignity of the human character, without which there is no reliance on principle, no constancy in virtue – a something," continued my uncle gallantly, and with a half bow towards my mother, "which your sex shares with our own. When the lover, for instance, clasps the hand of his betrothed, and says, 'Wilt thou be true to me, in spite of absence and time, in spite of hazard and fortune, though my foes malign me, though thy friends may dissuade thee, and our lot in life may be rough and rude?' and when the betrothed answers, 'I will be true,' does not the lover trust to her courage as well as her love?"

"Admirably put, Roland," said my father. "But *apropos* of what do you puzzle us with these queries on courage?"

Captain Roland, (with a slight blush.) – "I was led to the inquiry (though, perhaps, it may be frivolous to take so much thought of what, no doubt, costs Pisistratus so little) by the last chapters in my nephew's story. I see this poor boy, Leonard, alone with his fallen hopes, (though very irrational they were,) and his sense of shame. And I read his heart, I dare say, better than Pisistratus does, for I could feel like that boy if I had been in the same position; and, conjecturing what he and thousands like him must go through, I asked myself, 'What can save him and them?' I answered, as a soldier would answer, 'Courage!' Very well. But pray, Austin, what is courage?"

Mr Caxton, (prudently backing out of a reply.) – "*Papæ!* Brother, since you have just complimented the ladies on that quality, you had better address your question to them."

Blanche here leant both hands on my father's chair, and said, looking down at first bashfully, but afterwards warming with the subject, "Do you not think, sir, that little Helen has already suggested, if not what is courage, what at least is the real essence of all courage that endures and conquers, that ennobles, and hallows, and redeems? Is it not Patience, father? – and that is why we women have a courage of our own. Patience does not affect to be superior to fear, but at least it never admits despair."

Pisistratus. – "Kiss me, my Blanche, for you have come near to the truth which perplexed the soldier and puzzled the sage."

Mr Caxton, (tartly.) – "If you mean me by the sage, I was not puzzled at all. Heaven knows you do right to inculcate patience – it is a virtue very much required in your readers. Nevertheless," added my father, softening with the enjoyment of his joke – "nevertheless Blanche and Helen are quite right. Patience is the courage of the conqueror; it is the virtue, *par excellence*, of Man against Destiny – of the One against the World, and of the Soul against Matter. Therefore this is the courage of the Gospel; and its importance, in a social view – its importance to races and institutions – cannot be too earnestly inculcated. What is it that distinguishes the Anglo-Saxon from all other branches of the human family, peoples deserts with his children, and consigns to them the heritage of rising worlds? What but his faculty to brave, to suffer, to endure – the patience that resists firmly, and innovates slowly. Compare him with the Frenchman. The Frenchman has plenty of valour – that there is no denying; but as for fortitude, he has not enough to cover the point of a pin. He is ready to rush out of the world if he is bit by a flea."

Captain Roland. – "There was a case in the papers the other day, Austin, of a Frenchman who actually did destroy himself because he was so teased by the little creatures you speak of. He left a paper on his table, saying that 'life was not worth having at the price of such torments.'"[5]

Mr Caxton, (solemnly.) – "Sir, their whole political history, since the great meeting of the Tiers Etat, has been the history of men who would rather go to the devil than be bit by a flea. It is the record of human impatience, that seeks to force time, and expects to grow forests from the spawn of a mushroom. Wherefore, running through all extremes of constitutional experiment, when they

[5] Fact. In a work by M. Gibert, a celebrated French physician, on diseases of the skin, he states that that minute troublesome kind of rash, known by the name of *prurigo*, though not dangerous in itself, has often driven the individual afflicted by it to – suicide. I believe that our more varying climate, and our more heating drinks and aliments, render this skin complaint more common in England than in France, yet I doubt if any English physician could state that it had ever driven one of his *English* patients to suicide.

are nearest to democracy they are next door to a despot; and all they have really done is to destroy whatever constitutes the foundation of every tolerable government. A constitutional monarchy cannot exist without aristocracy, nor a healthful republic endure with corruption of manners. The cry of Equality is incompatible with Civilisation, which, of necessity, contrasts poverty with wealth – and, in short, whether it be an emperor or a mob that is to rule, Force is the sole hope of order, and the government is but an army.

"Impress, O Pisistratus! impress the value of patience as regards man and men. You touch there on the kernel of the social system – the secret that fortifies the individual and disciplines the million. I care not, for my part, if you are tedious so long as you are earnest. Be minute and detailed. Let the real human life, in its war with Circumstance, stand out. Never mind if one can read you but slowly – better chance of being less quickly forgotten. Patience, patience! By the soul of Epictetus, your readers shall set you an example!"

CHAPTER II

Leonard had written twice to Mrs Fairfield, twice to Riccabocca, and once to Mr Dale; and the poor proud boy could not bear to betray his humiliation. He wrote as with cheerful spirits – as if perfectly satisfied with his prospects. He said that he was well employed, in the midst of books, and that he had found kind friends. Then he turned from himself to write about those whom he addressed, and the affairs and interests of the quiet world wherein they lived. He did not give his own address, nor that of Mr Prickett. He dated his letters from a small coffeehouse near the bookseller, to which he occasionally went for his simple meals. He had a motive in this. He did not desire to be found out. Mr Dale replied for himself and for Mrs Fairfield, to the epistles addressed to these two. Riccabocca wrote also. Nothing could be more kind than the replies of both. They came to Leonard in a very dark period in his life, and they strengthened him in the noiseless battle with despair.

If there be a good in the world that we do without knowing it, without conjecturing the effect it may have upon a human soul, it is when we show kindness to the young in the first barren footpath up the mountain of life.

Leonard's face resumed its serenity in his intercourse with his employer; but he did not recover his boyish ingenuous frankness. The under-currents flowed again pure from the turbid soil and the splintered fragments uptorn from the deep; but they were still too strong and too rapid to allow transparency to the surface. And now he stood in the sublime world of books, still and earnest as a seer who invokes the dead. And thus, face to face with knowledge, hourly he discovered how little he knew. Mr Prickett lent him such works as he selected and asked to take home with him. He spent whole nights in reading; and no longer desultorily. He read no more poetry, no more Lives of Poets. He read what poets must read if they desire to be great —*Sapere principium et fons*– strict reasonings on the human mind; the relations between motive and conduct, thought and action; the grave and solemn truths of the past world; antiquities, history, philosophy. He was taken out of himself. He was carried along the ocean of the universe. In that ocean, O seeker, study the law of the tides; and seeing Chance nowhere – Thought presiding over all – Fate, that dread phantom, shall vanish from creation, and Providence alone be visible in heaven and on earth!

CHAPTER III

There was to be a considerable book-sale at a country house one day's journey from London. Mr Prickett meant to have attended it on his own behalf, and that of several gentlemen who had given him commissions for purchase; but, on the morning fixed for his departure, he was seized with a severe return of his old foe the rheumatism. He requested Leonard to attend instead of himself. Leonard went, and was absent for the three days during which the sale lasted. He returned late in the evening, and went at once to Mr Prickett's house. The shop was closed; he knocked at the private entrance; a strange person opened the door to him, and, in reply to his question if Mr Prickett was at home, said with a long and funereal face – "Young man, Mr Prickett senior is gone to his long home, but Mr Richard Prickett will see you."

At this moment a very grave-looking man, with lank hair, looked forth from the side-door communicating between the shop and the passage, land then, stepped forward – "Come in, sir; you are my late uncle's assistant, Mr Fairfield, I suppose?"

"Your late uncle! Heavens, sir, do I understand aright – can Mr Prickett be dead since I left London?"

"Died, sir, suddenly last night. It was an affection of the heart; the Doctor thinks the rheumatism attacked that organ. He had small time to provide for his departure, and his account-books seem in sad disorder: I am his nephew and executor."

Leonard had now followed the nephew into the shop. There, still burned the gas-lamp. The place seemed more dingy and cavernous than before. Death always makes its presence felt in the house it visits.

Leonard was greatly affected – and yet more, perhaps, by the utter want of feeling which the nephew exhibited. In fact, the deceased had not been on friendly terms with this person, his nearest relative and heir-at-law, who was also a bookseller.

"You were engaged but by the week I find, young man, on reference to my late uncle's papers. He gave you £1 a week – a monstrous sum! I shall not require your services any further. I shall move these books to my own house. You will be good enough to send me a list of those you bought at the sale, and your account of travelling-expenses, &c. What may be due to you shall be sent to your address. Good evening."

Leonard went home, shocked and saddened at the sudden death of his kind employer. He did not think much of himself that night; but, when he rose the next day, he suddenly felt that the world of London lay before him, without a friend, without a calling, without an occupation for bread.

This time it was no fancied sorrow, no poetic dream disappointed. Before him, gaunt and palpable, stood Famine.

Escape! – yes. Back to the village; his mother's cottage; the exile's garden; the radishes and the fount. Why could he not escape? Ask why civilisation cannot escape its ills, and fly back to the wild and the wigwam?

Leonard could not have returned to the cottage, even if the Famine that faced had already seized him with her skeleton hand. London releases not so readily her fated stepsons.

CHAPTER IV

One day three persons were standing before an old book-stall in a passage leading from Oxford Street into Tottenham Court Road. Two were gentlemen; the third, of the class and appearance of those who more habitually halt at old book-stalls.

"Look," said one of the gentlemen to the other, "I have discovered here what I have searched for in vain the last ten years – the Horace of 1580, the Horace of the Forty Commentators – a perfect treasury of learning, and marked only fourteen shillings!"

"Hush, Norreys," said the other, "and observe what is yet more worth your study;" and he pointed to the third bystander, whose face, sharp and attenuated, was bent with an absorbed, and, as it were, with a hungering attention over an old worm-eaten volume.

"What is the book, my lord?" whispered Mr Norreys.

His companion smiled, and replied by another question, "What is the man who reads the book?"

Mr Norreys moved a few paces, and looked over the student's shoulder "Preston's translation of Boethius, *The Consolations of Philosophy*," he said, coming back to his friend.

"He looks as if he wanted all the consolations Philosophy can give him, poor boy."

At this moment a fourth passenger paused at the book-stall, and, recognising the pale student, placed his hand on his shoulder and said, "Aha, young sir, we meet again. So poor Prickett is dead. But you are still haunted by associations. Books – books – magnets to which all iron minds move insensibly. What is this? Boethius! Ah, a book written in prison, but a little time before the advent of the only philosopher who solves to the simplest understanding every mystery of life – "

"And that philosopher?"

"Is Death!" said Mr Burley. "How can you be dull enough to ask? Poor Boethius, rich, nobly born, a consul, his sons consuls – the world one smile to the Last Philosopher of Rome. Then suddenly, against this type of the old world's departing WISDOM, stands frowning the new world's grim genius, FORCE – Theodoric the Ostrogoth condemning Boethius the Schoolman; and Boethius, in his Pavian dungeon, holding a dialogue with the shade of Athenian Philosophy. It is the finest picture upon which lingers the glimmering of the Western golden day, before night rushes over time."

"And," said Mr Norreys abruptly, "Boethius comes back to us with the faint gleam of returning light, translated by Alfred the Great. And, again, as the sun of knowledge bursts forth in all its splendour, by Queen Elizabeth. Boethius influences us as we stand in this passage; and that is the best of all the Consolations of Philosophy – eh, Mr Burley?"

Mr Burley turned and bowed.

The two men looked at each other; you could not see a greater contrast. Mr Burley, his gay green dress already shabby and soiled, with a rent in the skirts, and his face speaking of habitual night-cups. Mr Norreys, neat and somewhat precise in dress, with firm lean figure, and quiet, collected, vigorous energy in his eye and aspect.

"If," replied Mr Burley, "a poor devil like me may argue with a gentleman who may command his own price with the booksellers, I should say it is no consolation at all, Mr Norreys. And I should like to see any man of sense accept the condition of Boethius in his prison, with some strangler or headsman waiting behind the door, upon the promised proviso that he should be translated, centuries afterwards, by Kings and Queens, and help indirectly to influence the minds of Northern barbarians, babbling about him in an alley, jostled by passers-by who never heard the name of Boethius, and who don't care a fig for philosophy. Your servant, sir – young man, come and talk."

Burley hooked his arm within Leonard's, and led the boy passively away.

"That is a clever man," said Harley L'Estrange. "But I am sorry to see yon young student, with his bright earnest eyes, and his lip that has the quiver of passion and enthusiasm, leaning on the arm

of a guide who seems disenchanted of all that gives purpose to learning and links philosophy with use to the world. Who, and what is this clever man whom you call Burley?"

"A man who might have been famous, if he had condescended to be respectable! The boy listening to us both so attentively interested *me* too – I should like to have the making of him. But I must buy this Horace."

The shopman, lurking within his hole like a spider for flies, was now called out. And when Mr Norreys had bought the Horace, and given an address where to send it, Harley asked the shopman if he knew the young man who had been reading Boethius.

"Only by sight. He has come here every day the last week, and spends hours at the stall. When once he fastens on a book, he reads it through."

"And never buys?" said Mr Norreys.

"Sir," said the shopman with a good-natured smile, "they who buy seldom read. The poor boy pays me twopence a-day to read as long as he pleases. I would not take it, but he is proud."

"I have known men amass great learning in that way," said Mr Norreys. "Yes, I should like to have that boy in my hands. And now, my lord, I am at your service, and we will go to the studio of your artist."

The two gentlemen walked on towards one of the streets out of Fitzroy Square.

In a few minutes more Harley L'Estrange was in his element, seated carelessly on a deal table, smoking his cigar, and discussing art with the gusto of a man who honestly loved, and the taste of a man who thoroughly understood it. The young artist, in his dressing robe, adding slow touch upon touch, paused often to listen the better. And Henry Norreys, enjoying the brief respite from a life of great labour, was gladly reminded of idle hours under rosy skies; for these three men had formed their friendship in Italy, where the bands of friendship are woven by the hands of the Graces.

CHAPTER V

Leonard and Mr Burley walked on into the suburbs round the north road from London, and Mr Burley offered to find literary employment for Leonard – an offer eagerly accepted.

Then they went into a public house by the wayside. Burley demanded a private room, called for pen, ink, and paper; and, placing these implements before Leonard, said, "Write what you please in prose, five sheets of letter paper, twenty-two lines to a page – neither more nor less."

"I cannot write so."

"Tut, 'tis for bread."

The boy's face crimsoned.

"I must forget that," said he.

"There is an arbour in the garden under a weeping ash," returned Burley. "Go there, and fancy yourself in Arcadia."

Leonard was too pleased to obey. He found out the little arbour at one end of a deserted bowling-green. All was still – the hedgerow shut out the sight of the inn. The sun lay warm on the grass, and glinted pleasantly through the leaves of the ash. And Leonard there wrote the first essay from his hand as Author by profession. What was it that he wrote? His dreamy impressions of London? an anathema on its streets, and its hearts of stone? murmurs against poverty? dark elegies on fate?

Oh, no! little knowest thou true genius, if thou askest such questions, or thinkest that there, under the weeping ash, the taskwork for bread was remembered; or that the sunbeam glinted but over the practical world, which, vulgar and sordid, lay around. Leonard wrote a fairy tale – one of the loveliest you can conceive, with a delicate touch of playful humour – in a style all flowered over with happy fancies. He smiled as he wrote the last word – he was happy. In rather more than an hour Mr Burley came to him, and found him with that smile on his lips.

Mr Burley had a glass of brandy and water in his hand; it was his third. He too smiled – he too looked happy. He read the paper aloud, and well. He was very complimentary. "You will do!" said he, clapping Leonard on the back. "Perhaps some day you will catch my one-eyed perch." Then he folded up the MS., scribbled off a note, put the whole in one envelope – and they returned to London.

Mr Burley disappeared within a dingy office near Fleet Street, on which was inscribed – "Office of the *Beehive*," and soon came forth with a golden sovereign in his hand – Leonard's first-fruits. Leonard thought Peru lay before him. He accompanied Mr Burley to that gentleman's lodging in Maida Hill. The walk had been very long; Leonard was not fatigued. He listened with a livelier attention than before to Burley's talk. And when they reached the apartments of the latter, and Mr Burley sent to the cookshop, and their joint supper was taken out of the golden sovereign, Leonard felt proud, and for the first time for weeks he laughed the heart's laugh. The two writers grew more and more intimate and cordial. And there was a vast deal in Burley by which any young man might be made the wiser. There was no apparent evidence of poverty in the apartments – clean, new, well furnished; but all things in the most horrible litter – all speaking of the huge literary sloven.

For several days Leonard almost lived in those rooms. He wrote continuously – save when Burley's conversation fascinated him into idleness. Nay, it was not idleness – his knowledge grew larger as he listened; but the cynicism of the talker began slowly to work its way. That cynicism in which there was no faith, no hope, no vivifying breath from Glory – from Religion. The cynicism of the Epicurean, more degraded in his stye than ever was Diogenes in his tub; and yet presented with such ease and such eloquence – with such art and such mirth – so adorned with illustration and anecdote, so unconscious of debasement.

Strange and dread philosophy – that made it a maxim to squander the gifts of mind on the mere care for matter, and fit the soul to live but as from day to day, with its scornful cry, "A fig for

immortality and laurels!" An author for bread! Oh, miserable calling! was there something grand and holy, after all, even in Chatterton's despair!

CHAPTER VI

The villanous *Beehive*! Bread was worked out of it, certainly; but fame, but hope for the future – certainly not. Milton's *Paradise Lost* would have perished without a sound, had it appeared in the *Beehive*.

Fine things were there in a fragmentary crude state, composed by Burley himself. At the end of a week they were dead and forgotten – never read by one man of education and taste; taken simultaneously and indifferently with shallow politics and wretched essays, yet selling, perhaps, twenty or thirty thousand copies – an immense sale; – and nothing got out of them but bread and brandy!

"What more would you have?" cried John Burley. "Did not stern old Sam Johnson say he could never write but from want?"

"He might say it," answered Leonard; "but he never meant posterity to believe him. And he would have died of want, I suspect, rather than have written *Rasselas* for the *Beehive*! Want is a grand thing," continued the boy, thoughtfully. "A parent of grand things. Necessity is strong, and should give us its own strength; but Want should shatter asunder, with its very writhings, the walls of our prison-house, and not sit contented with the allowance the jail gives us in exchange for our work."

"There is no prison-house to a man who calls upon Bacchus – stay – I will translate to you Schiller's Dithyramb. 'Then see I Bacchus – then up come Cupid and Phœbus, and all the Celestials are filling my dwelling.'"

Breaking into impromptu careless rhymes, Burley threw off a rude but spirited translation of that divine lyric.

"O materialist!" cried the boy, with his bright eyes suffused. "Schiller calls on the gods to take him to their heaven with him; and you would debase the gods to a gin palace."

"Ho, ho!" cried Burley, with his giant laugh. "Drink, and you will understand the Dithyramb."

CHAPTER VII

Suddenly one morning, as Leonard sate with Barley, a fashionable cabriolet, with a very handsome horse, stopped at the door – a loud knock – a quick step on the stairs, and Randal Leslie entered. Leonard recognised him, and started. Randal glanced at him in surprise, and then, with a tact that showed he had already learned to profit by London life, after shaking hands with Burley, approached, and said with some successful attempt at ease, "Unless I am not mistaken, sir, we have met before. If you remember me, I hope all boyish quarrels are forgotten?"

Leonard bowed, and his heart was still good enough to be softened.

"Where could you two ever have met?" asked Burley.

"In a village green, and in single combat," answered Randal, smiling; and he told the story of the Battle of the Stocks, with a well-bred jest on himself. Burley laughed at the story. "But," said he, when this laugh was over, "my young friend had better have remained guardian of the village stocks, than come to London in search of such fortune as lies at the bottom of an inkhorn."

"Ah," said Randal, with the secret contempt which men elaborately cultivated are apt to feel for those who seek to educate themselves – "ah, you make literature your calling, sir? At what school did you conceive a taste for letters? – not very common at our great public schools."

"I am at school now for the first time," answered Leonard, drily.

"Experience is the best schoolmistress," said Burley; "and that was the maxim of Goethe, who had book-learning enough, in all conscience."

Randal slightly shrugged his shoulders, and, without wasting another thought on Leonard, peasant-born and self-taught, took his seat, and began to talk to Burley upon a political question, which made then the war-cry between the two great Parliamentary parties. It was a subject in which Burley showed much general knowledge; and Randal, seeming to differ from him, drew forth alike his information and his argumentative powers. The conversation lasted more than an hour.

"I can't quite agree with you," said Randal, taking his leave; "but you must allow me to call again – will the same hour to-morrow suit you?"

"Yes," said Burley.

Away went the young man in his cabriolet. Leonard watched him from the window.

For five days, consecutively, did Randal call and discuss the question in all its bearings; and Burley, after the second day, got interested in the matter, looked up his authorities – refreshed his memory – and even spent an hour or two in the Library of the British Museum.

By the fifth day, Burley had really exhausted all that could well be said on his side of the question.

Leonard, during these colloquies, had sate apart, seemingly absorbed in reading, and secretly stung by Randal's disregard of his presence. For indeed that young man, in his superb self-esteem, and in the absorption of his ambitious projects, scarce felt even curiosity as to Leonard's rise above his earlier station, and looked on him as a mere journeyman of Burley's. But the self-taught are keen and quick observers. And Leonard had remarked, that Randal seemed more as one playing a part for some private purpose, than arguing in earnest; and that, when he rose and said, "Mr Burley, you have convinced me," it was not with the modesty of a sincere reasoner, but the triumph of one who has gained his end. But so struck, meanwhile, was our unheeded and silent listener, with Burley's power of generalisation, and the wide surface over which his information extended, that when Randal left the room the boy looked at the slovenly purposeless man, and said aloud – "True; knowledge is *not*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.