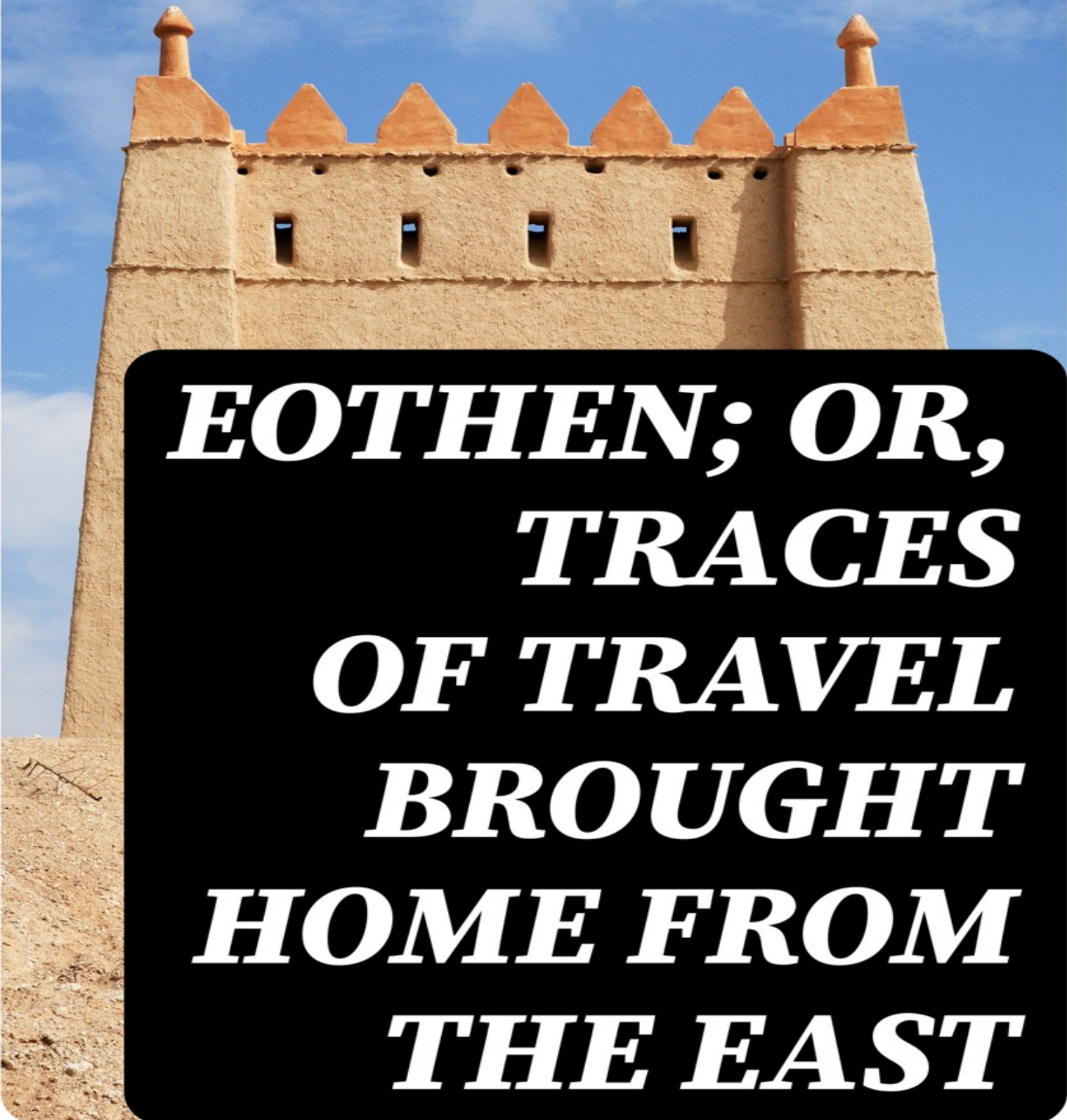


**ALEXANDER  
WILLIAM  
KINGLAKE**



**EOTHEN; OR,  
TRACES  
OF TRAVEL  
BROUGHT  
HOME FROM  
THE EAST**



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**Alexander William Kinglake**

# **Eothen; Or, Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EOTHEN—A. W. KINGSLAKE

CHAPTER I—OVER THE BORDER

CHAPTER II—TURKISH TRAVELLING

CHAPTER III—CONSTANTINOPLE

CHAPTER IV—THE TROAD

CHAPTER V—INFIDEL SMYRNA

CHAPTER VI—GREEK MARINERS

CHAPTER VII—CYPRUS

CHAPTER VIII—LADY HESTER STANHOPE

CHAPTER IX—THE SANCTUARY

CHAPTER X—THE MONKS OF PALESTINE

CHAPTER XI—GALILEE

CHAPTER XII—MY FIRST BIVOUAC

CHAPTER XIII—THE DEAD SEA

CHAPTER XIV—THE BLACK TENTS

CHAPTER XV—PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN

CHAPTER XVI—TERRA SANTA

CHAPTER XVII—THE DESERT

CHAPTER XVIII—CAIRO AND THE PLAGUE

CHAPTER XIX—THE PYRAMIDS

CHAPTER XX—THE SPHINX

CHAPTER XXI—CAIRO TO SUEZ

CHAPTER XXII—SUEZ

CHAPTER XXIII—SUEZ TO GAZA

CHAPTER XXIV—GAZA TO NABLUS

CHAPTER XXV—MARIAM

CHAPTER XXVI—THE PROPHET DAMOOR

CHAPTER XXVII—DAMASCUS

CHAPTER XXVIII—PASS OF THE LEBANON

CHAPTER XXIX—SURPRISE OF SATALIEH

APPENDIX—THE HOME OF LADY HESTER STANHOPE

# **EOTHEN—A. W. KINGSLAKE**

[Table of Contents](#)

# CHAPTER I—OVER THE BORDER

## Table of Contents

At Semlin I still was encompassed by the scenes and the sounds of familiar life; the din of a busy world still vexed and cheered me; the unveiled faces of women still shone in the light of day. Yet, whenever I chose to look southward, I saw the Ottoman's fortress—austere, and darkly impending high over the vale of the Danube—historic Belgrade. I had come, as it were, to the end of this wheel-going Europe, and now my eyes would see the splendour and havoc of the East.

The two frontier towns are less than a cannon-shot distant, and yet their people hold no communion. The Hungarian on the north, and the Turk and Servian on the southern side of the Save are as much asunder as though there were fifty broad provinces that lay in the path between them. Of the men that bustled around me in the streets of Semlin there was not, perhaps, one who had ever gone down to look upon the stranger race dwelling under the walls of that opposite castle. It is the plague, and the dread of the plague, that divide the one people from the other. All coming and going stands forbidden by the terrors of the yellow flag. If you dare to break the laws of the quarantine, you will be tried with military haste; the court will scream out your sentence to you from a tribunal some fifty yards off; the priest, instead of gently whispering to you the sweet hopes of religion, will console you at duelling distance; and after that you will find yourself carefully shot, and carelessly buried in the ground of the lazaretto.



When all was in order for our departure we walked down to the precincts of the quarantine establishment, and here awaited us a “compromised” [1] officer of the Austrian Government, who lives in a state of perpetual excommunication. The boats, with their “compromised” rowers, were also in readiness.

After coming in contact with any creature or thing belonging to the Ottoman Empire it would be impossible for us to return to the Austrian territory without undergoing an imprisonment of fourteen days in the odious lazaretto. We felt, therefore, that before we committed ourselves it was important to take care that none of the arrangements necessary for the journey had been forgotten; and in our anxiety to avoid such a misfortune, we managed the work of departure from Semlin with nearly as much solemnity as if we had been departing this life. Some obliging persons, from whom we had received civilities during our short stay in the place, came down to say their farewell at the river’s side; and now, as we stood with them at the distance of three or four yards from the “compromised” officer, they asked if we were perfectly certain that we had wound up all our affairs in Christendom, and whether we had no parting requests to make. We repeated the caution to our servants, and took anxious thought lest by any possibility we might be cut off from some cherished object of affection:—were they quite sure that nothing had been forgotten—that there was no fragrant dressing-case with its gold-compelling letters of credit from which we might be parting for ever?—No; all our treasures lay safely stowed in the boat, and we were ready to follow them to the ends of the earth. Now,



therefore, we shook hands with our Semlin friends, who immediately retreated for three or four paces, so as to leave us in the centre of a space between them and the “compromised” officer. The latter then advanced, and asking once more if we had done with the civilised world, held forth his hand. I met it with mine, and there was an end to Christendom for many a day to come.

We soon neared the southern bank of the river, but no sounds came down from the blank walls above, and there was no living thing that we could yet see, except one great hovering bird of the vulture race, flying low, and intent, and wheeling round and round over the pest-accursed city.

But presently there issued from the postern a group of human beings—beings with immortal souls, and possibly some reasoning faculties; but to me the grand point was this, that they had real, substantial, and incontrovertible turbans. They made for the point towards which we were steering, and when at last I sprang upon the shore, I heard, and saw myself now first surrounded by men of Asiatic blood. I have since ridden through the land of the Osmanlees, from the Servian border to the Golden Horn—from the Gulf of Satalieh to the tomb of Achilles; but never have I seen such ultra-Turkish looking fellows as those who received me on the banks of the Save. They were men in the humblest order of life, having come to meet our boat in the hope of earning something by carrying our luggage up to the city; but poor though they were, it was plain that they were Turks of the proud old school, and had not yet forgotten the fierce, careless bearing of their once victorious race.

Though the province of Servia generally has obtained a kind of independence, yet Belgrade, as being a place of strength on the frontier, is still garrisoned by Turkish troops under the command of a Pasha. Whether the fellows who now surrounded us were soldiers, or peaceful inhabitants, I did not understand: they wore the old Turkish costume; vests and jackets of many and brilliant colours, divided from the loose petticoat-trousers by heavy volumes of shawl, so thickly folded around their waists as to give the meagre wearers something of the dignity of true corpulence. This cincture enclosed a whole bundle of weapons; no man bore less than one brace of immensely long pistols, and a yataghan (or cutlass), with a dagger or two of various shapes and sizes; most of these arms were inlaid with silver, and highly burnished, so that they contrasted shiningly with the decayed grandeur of the garments to which they were attached (this carefulness of his arms is a point of honour with the Osmanlee, who never allows his bright yataghan to suffer from his own adversity); then the long drooping mustachios, and the ample folds of the once white turbans, that lowered over the piercing eyes, and the haggard features of the men, gave them an air of gloomy pride, and that appearance of trying to be disdainful under difficulties, which I have since seen so often in those of the Ottoman people who live, and remember old times; they seemed as if they were thinking that they would have been more usefully, more honourably, and more piously employed in cutting our throats than in carrying our portmanteaus. The faithful Steel (Methley's Yorkshire servant) stood aghast for a moment at the sight of his master's luggage upon the

shoulders of these warlike porters, and when at last we began to move up he could scarcely avoid turning round to cast one affectionate look towards Christendom, but quickly again he marched on with steps of a man, not frightened exactly, but sternly prepared for death, or the Koran, or even for plural wives.

The Moslem quarter of a city is lonely and desolate. You go up and down, and on over shelving and hillocky paths through the narrow lanes walled in by blank, windowless dwellings; you come out upon an open space strewn with the black ruins that some late fire has left; you pass by a mountain of castaway things, the rubbish of centuries, and on it you see numbers of big, wolf-like dogs lying torpid under the sun, with limbs outstretched to the full, as if they were dead; storks, or cranes, sitting fearless upon the low roofs, look gravely down upon you; the still air that you breathe is loaded with the scent of citron, and pomegranate rinds scorched by the sun, or (as you approach the bazaar) with the dry, dead perfume of strange spices. You long for some signs of life, and tread the ground more heavily, as though you would wake the sleepers with the heel of your boot; but the foot falls noiseless upon the crumbling soil of an Eastern city, and silence follows you still. Again and again you meet turbans, and faces of men, but they have nothing for you—no welcome—no wonder—no wrath—no scorn—they look upon you as we do upon a December's fall of snow—as a “seasonable,” unaccountable, uncomfortable work of God, that may have been sent for some good purpose, to be revealed hereafter.

Some people had come down to meet us with an invitation from the Pasha, and we wound our way up to the castle. At the gates there were groups of soldiers, some smoking, and some lying flat like corpses upon the cool stones. We went through courts, ascended steps, passed along a corridor, and walked into an airy, whitewashed room, with an European clock at one end of it, and Moostapha Pasha at the other; the fine, old, bearded potentate looked very like Jove—like Jove, too, in the midst of his clouds, for the silvery fumes of the *narghile* [2] hung lightly circling round him.

The Pasha received us with the smooth, kind, gentle manner that belongs to well-bred Osmanlees; then he lightly clapped his hands, and instantly the sound filled all the lower end of the room with slaves; a syllable dropped from his lips which bowed all heads, and conjured away the attendants like ghosts (their coming and their going was thus swift and quiet, because their feet were bare, and they passed through no door, but only by the yielding folds of a purder). Soon the coffee-bearers appeared, every man carrying separately his tiny cup in a small metal stand; and presently to each of us there came a pipe-bearer, who first rested the bowl of the *tchibouque* at a measured distance on the floor, and then, on this axis, wheeled round the long cheery stick, and gracefully presented it on half-bended knee; already the well-kindled fire was glowing secure in the bowl, and so, when I pressed the amber up to mine, there was no coyness to conquer; the willing fume came up, and answered my slightest sigh, and followed softly every breath

inspired, till it touched me with some faint sense and understanding of Asiatic contentment.

Asiatic contentment! Yet scarcely, perhaps, one hour before I had been wanting my bill, and ringing for waiters, in a shrill and busy hotel.

In the Ottoman dominions there is scarcely any hereditary influence except that which belongs to the family of the Sultan, and wealth, too, is a highly volatile blessing, not easily transmitted to the descendant of the owner. From these causes it results that the people standing in the place of nobles and gentry are official personages, and though many (indeed the greater number) of these potentates are humbly born and bred, you will seldom, I think, find them wanting in that polished smoothness of manner, and those well-undulating tones which belong to the best Osmanlees. The truth is, that most of the men in authority have risen from their humble station by the arts of the courtier, and they preserve in their high estate those gentle powers of fascination to which they owe their success. Yet unless you can contrive to learn a little of the language, you will be rather bored by your visits of ceremony; the intervention of the interpreter, or dragoman as he is called, is fatal to the spirit of conversation. I think I should mislead you if I were to attempt to give the substance of any particular conversation with Orientals. A traveller may write and say that “the Pasha of So-and-so was particularly interested in the vast progress which has been made in the application of steam, and appeared to understand the structure of our machinery—that he remarked upon the gigantic results of our manufacturing industry—showed that he possessed

considerable knowledge of our Indian affairs, and of the constitution of the Company, and expressed a lively admiration of the many sterling qualities for which the people of England are distinguished." But the heap of commonplaces thus quietly attributed to the Pasha will have been founded perhaps on some such talking as this:—

*Pasha.*—The Englishman is welcome; most blessed among hours is this, the hour of his coming.

*Dragoman* (to the traveller).—The Pasha pays you his compliments.

*Traveller.*—Give him my best compliments in return, and say I'm delighted to have the honour of seeing him.

*Dragoman* (to the Pasha).—His lordship, this Englishman, Lord of London, Scornor of Ireland, Suppressor of France, has quitted his governments, and left his enemies to breathe for a moment, and has crossed the broad waters in strict disguise, with a small but eternally faithful retinue of followers, in order that he might look upon the bright countenance of the Pasha among Pashas—the Pasha of the everlasting Pashalik of Karaghoolookoldour.

*Traveller* (to his dragoman).—What on earth have you been saying about London? The Pasha will be taking me for a mere cockney. Have not I told you *always* to say that I am from a branch of the family of Mudcombe Park, and that I am to be a magistrate for the county of Bedfordshire, only I've not qualified, and that I should have been a deputy-lieutenant if it had not been for the extraordinary conduct of Lord Mountpromise, and that I was a candidate for Goldborough at the last election, and that I should have won easy if my committee had not been bought. I wish to

Heaven that if you *do* say anything about me, you'd tell the simple truth.

*Dragoman* [is silent].

*Pasha*.—What says the friendly Lord of London? is there aught that I can grant him within the Pashalik of Karaghoolookoldour?

*Dragoman* (growing, sulky and literal).—This friendly Englishman—this branch of Mudcombe—this head-purveyor of Goldborough—this possible policeman of Bedfordshire, is recounting his achievements, and the number of his titles.

*Pasha*.—The end of his honours is more distant than the ends of the earth, and the catalogue of his glorious deeds is brighter than the firmament of heaven!

*Dragoman* (to the traveller).—The Pasha congratulates your Excellency.

*Traveller*.—About Goldborough? The deuce he does!—but I want to get at his views in relation to the present state of the Ottoman Empire. Tell him the Houses of Parliament have met, and that there has been a speech from the throne, pledging England to preserve the integrity of the Sultan's dominions.

*Dragoman* (to the Pasha).—This branch of Mudcombe, this possible policeman of Bedfordshire, informs your Highness that in England the talking houses have met, and that the integrity of the Sultan's dominions has been assured for ever and ever by a speech from the velvet chair.

*Pasha*.—Wonderful chair! Wonderful houses!—whirr! whirr! all by wheels!—whiz! whiz! all by steam!—wonderful chair! wonderful houses! wonderful people!—whirr! whirr! all by wheels!—whiz! whiz! all by steam!



*Traveller* (to the dragoman).—What does the Pasha mean by that whizzing? he does not mean to say, does he, that our Government will ever abandon their pledges to the Sultan?

*Dragoman*.—No, your Excellency; but he says the English talk by wheels, and by steam.

*Traveller*.—That's an exaggeration; but say that the English really have carried machinery to great perfection; tell the Pasha (he'll be struck with that) that whenever we have any disturbances to put down, even at two or three hundred miles from London, we can send troops by the thousand to the scene of action in a few hours.

*Dragoman* (recovering his temper and freedom of speech).—His Excellency, this Lord of Mudcombe, observes to your Highness, that whenever the Irish, or the French, or the Indians rebel against the English, whole armies of soldiers, and brigades of artillery, are dropped into a mighty chasm called Euston Square, and in the biting of a cartridge they arise up again in Manchester, or Dublin, or Paris, or Delhi, and utterly exterminate the enemies of England from the face of the earth.

*Pasha*.—I know it—I know all—the particulars have been faithfully related to me, and my mind comprehends locomotives. The armies of the English ride upon the vapours of boiling caldrons, and their horses are flaming coals!—whirr! whirr! all by wheels!—whiz! whiz! all by steam!

*Traveller* (to his dragoman).—I wish to have the opinion of an unprejudiced Ottoman gentleman as to the prospects

of our English commerce and manufactures; just ask the Pasha to give me his views on the subject.

*Pasha* (after having received the communication of the dragoman).—The ships of the English swarm like flies; their printed calicoes cover the whole earth; and by the side of their swords the blades of Damascus are blades of grass. All India is but an item in the ledger-books of the merchants, whose lumber-rooms are filled with ancient thrones!—whirr! whirr! all by wheels!—whiz! whiz! all by steam.

*Dragoman*.—The Pasha compliments the cutlery of England, and also the East India Company.

*Traveller*.—The Pasha's right about the cutlery (I tried my scimitar with the common officers' swords belonging to our fellows at Malta, and they cut it like the leaf of a novel). Well (to the dragoman), tell the Pasha I am exceedingly gratified to find that he entertains such a high opinion of our manufacturing energy, but I should like him to know, though, that we have got something in England besides that. These foreigners are always fancying that we have nothing but ships, and railways, and East India Companies; do just tell the Pasha that our rural districts deserve his attention, and that even within the last two hundred years there has been an evident improvement in the culture of the turnip, and if he does not take any interest about that, at all events you can explain that we have our virtues in the country—that we are a truth-telling people, and, like the Osmanlees, are faithful in the performance of our promises. Oh! and, by-the-bye, whilst you are about it, you may as well just say at the end that the British yeoman is still, thank God! the British yeoman.

*Pasha* (after hearing the dragoman).—It is true, it is true:—through all Feringhistan the English are foremost and best; for the Russians are drilled swine, and the Germans are sleeping babes, and the Italians are the servants of songs, and the French are the sons of newspapers, and the Greeks they are weavers of lies, but the English and the Osmanlees are brothers together in righteousness; for the Osmanlees believe in one only God, and cleave to the Koran, and destroy idols, so do the English worship one God, and abominate graven images, and tell the truth, and believe in a book, and though they drink the juice of the grape, yet to say that they worship their prophet as God, or to say that they are eaters of pork, these are lies—lies born of Greeks, and nursed by Jews!

*Dragoman*.—The Pasha compliments the English.

*Traveller* (rising).—Well, I've had enough of this. Tell the Pasha I am greatly obliged to him for his hospitality, and still more for his kindness in furnishing me with horses, and say that now I must be off.

*Pasha* (after hearing the dragoman, and standing up on his divan). [3]—Proud are the sires, and blessed are the dams of the horses that shall carry his Excellency to the end of his prosperous journey. May the saddle beneath him glide down to the gates of the happy city, like a boat swimming on the third river of Paradise. May he sleep the sleep of a child, when his friends are around him; and the while that his enemies are abroad, may his eyes flame red through the darkness—more red than the eyes of ten tigers! Farewell!

*Dragoman*.—The Pasha wishes your Excellency a pleasant journey.

So ends the visit.

# CHAPTER II—TURKISH TRAVELLING

## Table of Contents

In two or three hours our party was ready; the servants, the Tatar, the mounted Suridgees, and the baggage-horses, altogether made up a strong cavalcade. The accomplished Mysseri, of whom you have heard me speak so often, and who served me so faithfully throughout my Oriental journeys, acted as our interpreter, and was, in fact, the brain of our corps. The Tatar, you know, is a government courier properly employed in carrying despatches, but also sent with travellers to speed them on their way, and answer with his head for their safety. The man whose head was thus pledged for our precious lives was a glorious-looking fellow, with the regular and handsome cast of countenance which is now characteristic of the Ottoman race. [4] His features displayed a good deal of serene pride, self-respect, fortitude, a kind of ingenuous sensuality, and something of instinctive wisdom, without any sharpness of intellect. He had been a Janissary (as I afterwards found), and kept up the odd strut of his old corps, which used to affright the Christians in former times—that rolling gait so comically pompous, that a close imitation of it, even in the broadest farce, would be looked upon as a very rough over-acting of the character. It is occasioned in part by dress and accoutrements. The weighty bundle of weapons carried upon the chest throws back the body so as to give it a wonderful portliness, and moreover, the immense masses of clothes that swathe his limbs force the wearer in walking to swing himself heavily round from left to right, and from right

to left. In truth, this great edifice of woollen, and cotton, and silk, and silver, and brass, and steel is not at all fitted for moving on foot; it cannot even walk without frightfully discomposing its fair proportions; and as to running—our Tatar ran *once* (it was in order to pick up a partridge that Methley had winged with a pistol-shot), and really the attempt was one of the funniest misdirections of human energy that wondering man ever saw. But put him in his stirrups, and then is the Tatar himself again: there he lives at his pleasure, reposing in the tranquillity of that true home (the home of his ancestors) which the saddle seems to afford him, and drawing from his pipe the calm pleasures of his “own fireside,” or else dashing sudden over the earth, as though for a moment he felt the mouth of a Turcoman steed, and saw his own Scythian plains lying boundless and open before him.

It was not till his subordinates had nearly completed their preparations for their march that our Tatar, “commanding the forces,” arrived; he came sleek and fresh from the bath (for so is the custom of the Ottomans when they start upon a journey), and was carefully accoutred at every point. From his thigh to his throat he was loaded with arms and other implements of a campaigning life. There is no scarcity of water along the whole road from Belgrade to Stamboul, but the habits of our Tatar were formed by his ancestors and not by himself, so he took good care to see that his leathern water-flask was amply charged and properly strapped to the saddle, along with his blessed *tchibouque*. And now at last he has cursed the Suridgees in all proper figures of speech, and is ready for a ride of a thousand miles; but before he

comforts his soul in the marble baths of Stamboul he will be another and a lesser man; his sense of responsibility, his too strict abstemiousness, and his restless energy, disdainful of sleep, will have worn him down to a fraction of the sleek Moostapha that now leads out our party from the gates of Belgrade.

The Suridgees are the men employed to lead the baggage-horses. They are most of them gipsies. Their lot is a sad one: they are the last of the human race, and all the sins of their superiors (including the horses) can safely be visited on them. But the wretched look often more picturesque than their betters; and though all the world despise these poor Suridgees, their tawny skins and their grisly beards will gain them honourable standing in the foreground of a landscape. We had a couple of these fellows with us, each leading a baggage-horse, to the tail of which last another baggage-horse was attached. There was a world of trouble in persuading the stiff angular portmanteaus of Europe to adapt themselves to their new condition and sit quietly on pack-saddles, but all was right at last, and it gladdened my eyes to see our little troop file off through the winding lanes of the city, and show down brightly in the plain beneath. The one of our party that seemed to be most out of keeping with the rest of the scene was Methley's Yorkshire servant, who always rode doggedly on in his pantry jacket, looking out for "gentlemen's seats."

Methley and I had English saddles, but I think we should have done just as well (I should certainly have seen more of the country) if we had adopted saddles like that of our Tatar, who towered so loftily over the scraggy little beast that



carried him. In taking thought for the East, whilst in England, I had made one capital hit which you must not forget—I had brought with me a pair of common spurs. These were a great comfort to me throughout my horseback travels, by keeping up the cheerfulness of the many unhappy nags that I had to bestride; the angle of the Oriental stirrup is a very poor substitute for spurs.

The Ottoman horseman, raised by his saddle to a great height above the humble level of the back that he bestrides, and using an awfully sharp bit, is able to lift the crest of his nag, and force him into a strangely fast shuffling walk, the orthodox pace for the journey. My comrade and I, using English saddles, could not easily keep our beasts up to this peculiar amble; besides, we thought it a bore to be *followed* by our attendants for a thousand miles, and we generally, therefore, did duty as the rearguard of our “grand army”; we used to walk our horses till the party in front had got into the distance, and then retrieve the lost ground by a gallop.

We had ridden on for some two or three hours; the stir and bustle of our commencing journey had ceased, the liveliness of our little troop had worn off with the declining day, and the night closed in as we entered the great Servian forest. Through this our road was to last for more than a hundred miles. Endless, and endless now on either side, the tall oaks closed in their ranks and stood gloomily lowering over us, as grim as an army of giants with a thousand years’ pay in arrear. One strived with listening ear to catch some tidings of that forest world within—some stirring of beasts, some night-bird’s scream, but all was quite hushed, except the voice of the cicadas that peopled every bough, and filled

the depths of the forest through and through, with one same hum everlasting—more stifling than very silence.

At first our way was in darkness, but after a while the moon got up, and touched the glittering arms and tawny faces of our men with light so pale and mystic, that the watchful Tatar felt bound to look out for demons, and take proper means for keeping them off: forthwith he determined that the duty of frightening away our ghostly enemies (like every other troublesome work) should fall upon the poor Suridgees, who accordingly lifted up their voices, and burst upon the dreadful stillness of the forest with shrieks and dismal howls. These precautions were kept up incessantly, and were followed by the most complete success, for not one demon came near us.

Long before midnight we reached the hamlet in which we were to rest for the night; it was made up of about a dozen clay huts, standing upon a small tract of ground hardly won from the forest. The peasants that lived there spoke a Slavonic dialect, and Mysseri's knowledge of the Russian tongue enabled him to talk with them freely. We took up our quarters in a square room with white walls and an earthen floor, quite bare of furniture, and utterly void of women. They told us, however, that these Servian villagers lived in happy abundance, but that they were careful to conceal their riches, as well as their wives.

The burthens unstrapped from the pack-saddles very quickly furnished our den: a couple of quilts spread upon the floor, with a carpet-bag at the head of each, became capital sofas—portmanteaus, and hat-boxes, and writing-cases, and books, and maps, and gleaming arms soon lay strewed

around us in pleasant confusion. Mysseri's canteen too began to yield up its treasures, but we relied upon finding some provisions in the village. At first the natives declared that their hens were mere old maids and all their cows unmarried, but our Tatar swore such a grand sonorous oath, and fingered the hilt of his yataghan with such persuasive touch, that the land soon flowed with milk, and mountains of eggs arose.

And soon there was tea before us, with all its unspeakable fragrance, and as we reclined on the floor, we found that a portmanteau was just the right height for a table; the duty of candlesticks was ably performed by a couple of intelligent natives; the rest of the villagers stood by the open doorway at the lower end of the room, and watched our banqueting with grave and devout attention.

The first night of your first campaign (though you be but a mere peaceful campaigner) is a glorious time in your life. It is so sweet to find one's self free from the stale civilisation of Europe! Oh my dear ally, when first you spread your carpet in the midst of these Eastern scenes, do think for a moment of those your fellow-creatures, that dwell in squares, and streets, and even (for such is the fate of many!) in actual country houses; think of the people that are "presenting their compliments," and "requesting the honour," and "much regretting,"—of those that are pinioned at dinner-tables; or stuck up in ballrooms, or cruelly planted in pews—ay, think of these, and so remembering how many poor devils are living in a state of utter respectability, you will glory the more in your own delightful escape.

I am bound to confess, however, that with all its charms a mud floor (like a mercenary match) does certainly promote early rising. Long before daybreak we were up, and had breakfasted; after this there was nearly a whole tedious hour to endure whilst the horses were laden by torch-light; but this had an end, and at last we went on once more. Cloaked, and sombre, at first we made our sullen way through the darkness, with scarcely one barter of words, but soon the genial morn burst down from heaven, and stirred the blood so gladly through our veins, that the very Suridgees, with all their troubles, could now look up for an instant, and almost seem to believe in the temporary goodness of God.

The actual movement from one place to another, in Europeanised countries, is a process so temporary—it occupies, I mean, so small a proportion of the traveller's entire time—that his mind remains unsettled, so long as the wheels are going; he may be alive enough to external objects of interest, and to the crowding ideas which are often invited by the excitement of a changing scene, but he is still conscious of being in a provisional state, and his mind is constantly recurring to the expected end of his journey; his ordinary ways of thought have been interrupted, and before any new mental habits can be formed he is quietly fixed in his hotel. It will be otherwise with you when you journey in the East. Day after day, perhaps week after week and month after month, your foot is in the stirrup. To taste the cold breath of the earliest morn, and to lead, or follow, your bright cavalcade till sunset through forests and mountain passes, through valleys and desolate plains, all

this becomes your MODE OF LIFE, and you ride, eat, drink, and curse the mosquitoes as systematically as your friends in England eat, drink, and sleep. If you are wise, you will not look upon the long period of time thus occupied in actual movement as the mere gulf dividing you from the end of your journey, but rather as one of those rare and plastic seasons of your life from which, perhaps, in after times you may love to date the moulding of your character—that is, your very identity. Once feel this, and you will soon grow happy and contented in your saddle-home. As for me and my comrade, however, in this part of our journey we often forgot Stamboul, forgot all the Ottoman Empire, and only remembered old times. We went back, loitering on the banks of Thames—not grim old Thames of “after life,” that washes the Parliament Houses, and drowns despairing girls—but Thames, the “old Eton fellow,” that wrestled with us in our boyhood till he taught us to be stronger than he. We bullied Keate, and scoffed at Larrey Miller, and Okes; we rode along loudly laughing, and talked to the grave Servian forest as though it were the “Brocas clump.”

Our pace was commonly very slow, for the baggage-horses served us for a drag, and kept us to a rate of little more than five miles in the hour, but now and then, and chiefly at night, a spirit of movement would suddenly animate the whole party; the baggage-horses would be teased into a gallop, and when once this was done, there would be such a banging of portmanteaus, and such convulsions of carpet-bags upon their panting sides, and the Suridgees would follow them up with such a hurricane of blows, and screams, and curses, that stopping or relaxing

was scarcely possible; then the rest of us would put our horses into a gallop, and so all shouting cheerily, would hunt, and drive the sumpter beasts like a flock of goats, up hill and down dale, right on to the end of their journey.

The distances at which we got relays of horses varied greatly; some were not more than fifteen or twenty miles, but twice, I think, we performed a whole day's journey of more than sixty miles with the same beasts.

When at last we came out from the forest our road lay through scenes like those of an English park. The green sward unfenced, and left to the free pasture of cattle, was dotted with groups of stately trees, and here and there darkened over with larger masses of wood, that seemed gathered together for bounding the domain, and shutting out some "infernal" fellow-creature in the shape of a newly made squire; in one or two spots the hanging copses looked down upon a lawn below with such sheltering mien, that seeing the like in England you would have been tempted almost to ask the name of the spend-thrift, or the madman who had dared to pull down "the old hall."

There are few countries less infested by "lions" than the provinces on this part of your route. You are not called upon to "drop a tear" over the tomb of "the once brilliant" anybody, or to pay your "tribute of respect" to anything dead or alive. There are no Servian or Bulgarian litterateurs with whom it would be positively disgraceful not to form an acquaintance; you have no staring, no praising to get through; the only public building of any interest that lies on the road is of modern date, but is said to be a good specimen of Oriental architecture; it is of a pyramidical

shape, and is made up of thirty thousand skulls, contributed by the rebellious Servians in the early part (I believe) of this century: I am not at all sure of my date, but I fancy it was in the year 1806 that the first skull was laid. I am ashamed to say that in the darkness of the early morning we unknowingly went by the neighbourhood of this triumph of art, and so basely got off from admiring “the simple grandeur of the architect’s conception,” and “the exquisite beauty of the fretwork.”

There being no “lions,” we ought at least to have met with a few perils, but the only robbers we saw anything of had been long since dead and gone. The poor fellows had been impaled upon high poles, and so propped up by the transverse spokes beneath them, that their skeletons, clothed with some white, wax-like remains of flesh, still sat up lolling in the sunshine, and listlessly stared without eyes.

One day it seemed to me that our path was a little more rugged than usual, and I found that I was deserving for myself the title of Sabalkansky, or “Transcender of the Balcan.” The truth is, that, as a military barrier, the Balcan is a fabulous mountain. Such seems to be the view of Major Keppell, who looked on it towards the east with the eye of a soldier, and certainly in the Sophia Pass, which I followed, there is no narrow defile, and no ascent sufficiently difficult to stop, or delay for long time, a train of siege artillery.

Before we reached Adrianople, Methley had been seized with we knew not what ailment, and when we had taken up our quarters in the city he was cast to the very earth by sickness. Adrianople enjoyed an English consul, and I felt sure that, in Eastern phrase, his house would cease to be his



house, and would become the house of my sick comrade. I should have judged rightly under ordinary circumstances, but the levelling plague was abroad, and the dread of it had dominion over the consular mind. So now (whether dying or not, one could hardly tell), upon a quilt stretched out along the floor, there lay the best hope of an ancient line, without the material aids to comfort of even the humblest sort, and (sad to say) without the consolation of a friend, or even a comrade worth having. I have a notion that tenderness and pity are affections occasioned in some measure by living within doors; certainly, at the time I speak of, the open-air life which I have been leading, or the wayfaring hardships of the journey, had so strangely blunted me, that I felt intolerant of illness, and looked down upon my companion as if the poor fellow in falling ill had betrayed a want of spirit. I entertained too a most absurd idea—an idea that his illness was partly affected. You see that I have made a confession: this I hope—that I may always hereafter look charitably upon the hard, savage acts of peasants, and the cruelties of a “brutal” soldiery. God knows that I strived to melt myself into common charity, and to put on a gentleness which I could not feel, but this attempt did not cheat the keenness of the sufferer; he could not have felt the less deserted because that I was with him.

We called to aid a solemn Armenian (I think he was) half soothsayer, half hakim, or doctor, who, all the while counting his beads, fixed his eyes steadily upon the patient, and then suddenly dealt him a violent blow on the chest. Methley bravely dissembled his pain, for he fancied that the