

ART. XIX. *An Account of the Empire of Marocco and the District of Suse. Compiled from Miscellaneous Observations made during a long Residence in, and various Journies through these Countries. To which is added, an accurate and interesting Account of Tombuctoo, the great Emporium of Central Africa.* By James Grey Jackson, Esquire. 4to. pp. 303. London, 1809. Nicol and Son.

MR. Jackson was for sixteen years resident as a merchant in the empire of \*Marocco, and is perfectly familiar, as he assures us, with the languages and manners of north-western Africa. These are no common advantages; and though Mr. Jackson, it must be owned, appears fully aware of their extent,—yet a work coming from a person so qualified, is a real accession to the stock of geographical and political knowledge. They must indeed have small thirst after either, who will not readily forgive the *arrogant italics* in his preface, or the hardy promise in his title-page of an *accurate* account of a city, which he only knows through the medium of African traders. His preface however contains a great deal of valuable matter; and Mr. J.'s advice, that a traveller in Africa should conform to the native dress, and have previously resided some time in Barbary, is well worth the attention of such champions of commerce and civilization, as may dare hereafter a journey little less portentous than that of Milton's Archfiend, 'over the burning marle,' and beneath 'a clime vaulted with fire.'

The empire of Marocco (for in Africa it really deserves the title) appears from Mr. Jackson's statement to be far more important in population and resources than former accounts have led us to believe. Of the population we shall have occasion to speak hereafter: the natural productions are of great variety and value. Blessed with a serene and invigorating climate, tempered by the ocean on one side, and the snowy ridges of Atlas on the other; with a soil which only requires irrigation to become a garden; and numerous rivers by which that irrigation may be always procured;—these countries seem destined by nature to be the granary of the world, and to unite by a singular felicity the naval resources of the north, with the luxuriant fertility of more southern regions. In general, however, we are struck with the resemblance both in soil and climate to Spain; and we cannot but wonder that so wide and

---

\* We readily adopt Mr. J.'s new and more correct orthography. Correctness is always desirable; and though, where a name has been fixed by long custom in history, it is unwise to change it, this is seldom the case with barbarous countries. We may safely adopt Marocco and Faz, though we might hesitate to call Darius, 'Dara.'

tempting a field for avarice and ambition, within sight of Europe, to which it is now little more than a pest, should not have long since invited the arms and colonies of its neighbours. The northern provinces, as may be supposed, are most fertile in corn, and have also the largest forests of oak and cork trees. The southern, particularly Suse, are incredibly rich in fruits and in vineyards, and the sugar cane grows spontaneously.

‘Cotton, indigo, gum, and various kinds of medicinal herbs are produced here.’—‘The olive plantations in different parts of Suse are extensive and extremely productive: about Ras el Wed and Terodant a traveller may proceed two days through these plantations, which form an uninterrupted shade impenetrable to the rays of the sun: the same may be said of the plantations of the almond, which also abound in this province.’

The date here begins to produce a luxurious fruit, and the whole country might be made one entire vineyard.

The mountains of Atlas possess the advantages of many climates, and are rich in copper, iron, lead, sulphur, and saltpetre; there are also mines of gold, mixed with antimony and lead ore. Draha, Taplet, and Bled el Jeredde, which are on the eastern side of Atlas, partake of the inconveniences of the elevated desert on which they border, and are barren and thinly peopled. Yet even here are indigo and other valuable productions. Dates, which require more sun and less water than any other fruit, are abundant and excellent; and the inhabitants, like those of most remote provinces, have the reputation, at least among themselves, of strict and primitive honesty. ‘A robbery has hardly been known in the memory of the oldest man, though they use no locks.’ The author corrects an error of Leo Africanus, of whom he speaks in general with the highest respect, in confounding the two rivers Suse and Massa, which Mr. Jackson himself ascertained to be different streams, and thirty miles distant from each other. He blames him however with less reason, for misstating the boundary between Haha and Suse, which may well have varied in a length of years, and according to Mr. Jackson himself, has actually been changed since Leo wrote.

The observations on the zoology of northern Africa, though it contains little or nothing in which he has not been forestalled by Bruce and Shaw, is still interesting and curious. He blames Bruce unjustly for confounding the *deeb* and *dubbah*, and adds that ‘nothing but a want of knowledge of the Arabic language could have induced him to suppose a similarity.’ p. 29. Now the fact is, that Bruce, who knew quite as much Arabic, and had lived nearly as long in Barbary as Mr. Jackson himself, makes no such mistake:

he

he expressly says, the proper name of the hyæna is dubbah, and that this is the name he goes by among the best Arabian naturalists. 'In Algiers,' says he, 'this distinction is preserved strictly—dubbah is the hyæna; deeb is the jackall.' All Bruce asserts is, that 'in Abyssinia, Nubia, and part of Arabia, the hyæna is both in writing and conversation called deeb.' And he proceeds to state that this is a cause of confusion.—Can Mr. Jackson have really read this passage; or is he prepared to assert that Bruce is not as competent to decide on the dialects of eastern, as Mr. Jackson is on those of western Africa? So full, however, is he of this supposed error, that he repeats his discovery once in the notes, and again in the text, in the course of three pages; as well as an observation of Pennant, who complains that Bruce has not given a distinct Arabic name for the *red* fox; when, as it appears from Mr. Jackson himself, no such name is to be found; and both kinds of fox alike are called thaleb, p. 26. The same ostentation of Arabic knowledge occurs in giving, as his own discovery, the derivation of Bled el Jeredde, when he might have known that Shaw fifty years before had explained it in the same manner. We mention these little traits of authorship with regret, because they are unworthy of Mr. Jackson's general good sense and candour, and of the knowledge of Arabic, which he may be reasonably believed to possess. The aoudah appears to be a hitherto undescribed variety of the chamois. The sibsib resembles in most respects the ashkoko of Bruce, but differs, if Mr. Jackson be accurate, in its long and beautiful tail. If the ashkoko be considered as the rock rabbit, the sibsib may lay claim to the appellation of rock squirrel. Mr. Jackson's description of the heirie or dromedary, whose swiftness\* 'gives to the air a drowning force,' is very interesting, and however incredible, corroborated by every writer on Africa from the earliest ages. The desert horse, or shr'ubbah er'reeh, is mentioned by Blount, who travelled in Egypt in the reign of James the First. Mr. Parke, when in the camp of Benowm, observed the extraordinary swiftness of this animal, and that he had a feed of milk every day; though he did not consider this as his only food, but mentions also dry grass and barley. The wool of Mauretania probably only requires care to be as fine as that of Spain.

Mr. Jackson's experiments on the camelion, if made with sufficient care, are extremely curious. His Boah is unquestionably of the same species with the gigantic serpent which engaged the army of Regulus. Such a creature, however, is generally supposed to require moisture; and it is contrary to all our received notions, to assign him a habitation in the desert. The magnificent bird

---

\* Southey's Thalaba.

(the *אֵשׁ* of scripture), which Bruce and our translators of the Bible consider as an eagle, is properly assigned by our author, and by Shaw before him, to the vulture tribe. It appears to be the Condor of South America, and is probably the foundation of all the eastern fables respecting the gigantic Rok. We were much surprised to find that the Berebbers of Atlas, as well as the ancient tribes of Caucasus, have their Gryphon, generated by the eagle on the female hyæna. Who would have expected to find these *διὸς ἀρπυγίας κύναις* in a part of the world so wide of their first station? and what can have been the origin of such a fable?

The population of the empire of Marocco, Mr. J. confidently fixes (and apparently from the best possible authority) at fourteen millions. This is no very extraordinary number for a fertile territory of 120,000 square miles; but it is far greater than former accounts gave us reason to suppose, and truly wonderful according to European notions, if we consider the tyranny of the government, and the want of external commerce. Nevertheless, making a reasonable allowance for the vanity of the Moors, and the slovenly manner in which, under a barbarous government, such inquiries would be carried on, we see no reason entirely to discredit the calculation. Where there is sufficient food, men will multiply under any oppression whatever; and where the habits of men are simple and parsimonious, and the cultivation of the ground is free to all, many centuries must elapse before a country is overstocked. A century ago, the population of barbarous countries was generally overrated. We believe our present calculators have fallen into the opposite extreme. Naples and Ireland are the two most populous countries of Europe; and we may conclude, by a parity of reason, that the luxury of England and France is a stronger check to the increase of inhabitants, than the bad government and civil dissensions of the Mohammedan sovereignties.

‘The inhabitants of the emperor of Marocco’s dominions may be divided into four classes; namely, Moors, Arabs, Berebbers, (which last are probably the aborigines,) and Shellahs.’ The Berebbers and Shellahs have each their peculiar language; the former, Mr. J. fancies, is a dialect of the ancient Carthaginian, and gives a reason which seems not a little whimsical, that many ‘possess the *old Roman physiognomy*.’ The Berebbers are probably a more ancient people in Africa than either the Romans or Carthaginians; and as they live in caves (a striking feature which they have in common with the Tibbo mentioned by Hornemann,) they may be a detached and distant remnant of the great nation of Troglodytæ. Mr. Jackson calls the language of Siwah a mixture of Berebber and Shellah; we confess, on comparing his vocabulary with that of Hornemann, there appears but little resemblance; yet

yet the idea is not improbable, any more than that the Shellahs are a branch of the Tuaric. The manners of these nations are ably and forcibly described, and seem to differ little from those of other Mohammedans; their morals are, if possible, worse than most of the same religion.

‘ They are suspicious, deceitful, and cruel; they have no respect for their neighbours, but will plunder one another whenever it is in their power; they are strangers to every social tie and affection, for their hearts are scarcely susceptible of one tender impression; the father fears the son, the son the father; and this lamentable mistrust and want of confidence diffuses itself through the whole community.

‘ The pride and arrogance of the Moors is unparalleled; for though they live in the most deplorable state of ignorance, slavery and barbarism, yet they consider themselves the first people in the world, and contemptuously term all others barbarians. Their sensuality knows no bounds: by the laws of the Koran, they are allowed four wives, and as many concubines as they can maintain; but such is their wretched depravity, that they indulge in the most unnatural and abominable propensities: in short, every vice that is disgraceful and degrading to human nature is to be found among them.’—p. 144.

With all this, a few good qualities may doubtless be discovered even in the most depraved; and their fortitude under adversity (though it be common to all barbarous nations, and proceeds in part from the risk continually incurred), the small beginning from which their wealth has risen, and, above all, their simple and frugal habits, which enable them better to struggle with want, are still truly admirable.

In spite of his bad opinion of the professors of Islam, Mr. J. seems to entertain a profound respect for their religion; and the chapter in which he treats of it (the 9th) is the only absurd part of his book. Not that the doctrines of Mohammed do not in fact approach much nearer to those of Moses, and even of Christ, than many bigoted Christians imagine; but that Mr. J., with a zeal which, however disinterested, is certainly not according to knowledge, has taken some of the least defensible grounds in the Koran. To give us a greater idea of its consequence, he tells us that it is ‘ embraced with *little exception* from the shores of West Barbary to the most eastern part of Chinese Tartary, an extent of upwards of eight thousand miles; and from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope, with the exception of a *few nations of Pagans*.’ What he means by *little exception*, or a *few nations*, we cannot pretend to say; but the exception to be made from his first stretch, is no less than *all* Chinese Tartary, *all* Tibet, *all* China, and *all* Russian and independent Tartary eastward of the Kirgus. Nor is his African arrangement much more happy;—even in  
Soudan,

Soudan, as it appears from Parke, Hornemann and Browne, a large proportion of the population is Pagan,—and, except a scanty sprinkling on the eastern coast, he would be puzzled to find a single Mohammedan southward of the Gibel Kumrie.

But the Mohammedan religion is not only widely extended, it is also tolerant,—‘and all liberal Mohammedans insist that every man ought to worship God after the law of his fathers.—“If it pleased God,” say they, “all men would believe; why then should a worm, a wretched mortal, be so foolish as to pretend to force other men to believe?”’—Excellent indeed!—but ‘they say’!—Who says so?—In what page of the Koran, or of its commentaries, is such doctrine held; or where is the contrary not held?—What says their apostle himself,—as good a judge of his own doctrines as a Christian merchant? ‘Fight against the unbelievers until there be no opposition in favour of idolatry, and the religion be wholly God’s.’—‘Strike off their heads till ye have made a great slaughter among them!’—Heaven preserve us from such toleration! But Mohammed, we are told, did not refuse *final* salvation to Jews and Christians, but contented himself with threatening them with *damage* in the world to come. If, however, the unbelievers are on the same footing with murderers and blasphemers, and to lie with them in the midst of hell, for thousands of years, nor to be admitted to paradise till after a wholesome regimen of the fruit of the tree Zaccum, ‘which resembleth the heads of devils,’ and Dr. Sanguado’s *boissons copieuses de l’eau chaude*; few Christians or Jews, we apprehend, would thank him for his mercy. We suspect some mistake when Mr. J. says, the hell of Mohammed is not eternal;—this description, we think, can only apply to Al Araf, or purgatory. We will only make one observation more. Mr. Jackson laughs at Peter Cevaller for not knowing that the Pharaohs reigned in Egypt, for many centuries,—and therefore objecting to Mohammed that he made *Haman* Pharaoh’s prime minister; but Peter Cevaller might retort the laugh on Mr. Jackson, for not recollecting that the last of the Pharaohs was a mummy long before the real Haman was born. After all, Cevaller’s argument is good for little, as the Mohammedans may plead that there were more Hamans than one.

In Mr. Jackson’s account of the state of our relations with the powers of Barbary, we find an interesting but melancholy picture of blunders, mismanagement and neglect, arising from total ignorance of the language and manners of the country, a total disregard in England of all but parliamentary objects, and a total unfitness of the persons sent as consuls and ambassadors. We earnestly hope that the present volume may call the attention of the country to the value of a closer connection with these interesting regions, which the ambition of France has long since coveted, and which would  
be

be of more importance to Britain than even to France herself. If we are deaf to the voice of policy, humanity itself should urge us to some measures of this sort; and the misery of our shipwrecked mariners, doomed by our neglect to famine, bondage, and apostacy (page 226), calls loudly on the nation for succour and redress.

The part of Mr. Jackson's work which will most powerfully attract attention is the description of Timbuctoo, and the course of the Niger. Of the first, though African accounts must be received *cum grano salis*, many interesting and probable particulars are given. Instead of being itself the capital of a mighty empire, it is subject to the negro sovereign of Bambarra, who thus appears to share with Houssa and Burnu nearly the whole length of the Niger. It is, however, when compared with Hornemann, whom our author singularly confirms, that the present work is most valuable and satisfactory. The white people found between Timbuctoo and Houssa, who have their faces muffled up, and are supposed to be Christians, are identified by this description with the Tagama of Hornemann; and still more so, as their language is compared to the whistling of birds.—(Jackson, p. 262; Hornemann, p. 110; Herod. Melp. 183). Their saddles, with long stirrups, seem to resemble those of the Abyssinians and Galla. Wangara, of which Mr. Browne heard nothing, is undoubtedly a part of Burnu,\* or perhaps the occidental name for the whole country. The distinction between its inhabitants and those of Houssa, of both of whom Mr. J. has seen specimens, entirely accords with Hornemann's observation.

The most interesting question of all is the termination of the Niger. Mr. Jackson believes, with Hornemann, that this mighty river is the western stream of the Bahr el Abiad; and with the most unfeigned deference to the high authority of Major Rennel, whose contrary opinion is before the world, we hope for indulgence while we state the principal circumstances which render such a junction probable.

It is generally known that this was the opinion of Herodotus (Euterpe), Dionysius (v. 222), Pliny (lib. iii.), and all the early geographers, with the exception, as has been supposed, of Strabo and Ptolemy; both of whom, however, have been misunderstood. Strabo, after laying down, from Eratosthenes, the situation of Meroe and the rivers Astaboras and Astapus, proceeds to say that

\* By Hornemann's account, Burnu is *south-west* of Fittèè; and the Wed el Gazel, far from being in its neighbourhood, is inhabited by wandering Tibbo. This cannot be reconciled with Mr. Browne's information; but, as the Furians were ignorant both of Wangara and its golden produce (Jackson, 245), this circumstance may throw discredit on the extent of their knowledge. R.



\* 'some called the Astapus, Astosabas; and asserted that there was another, *more correctly called Astapus*, which flowed from lakes in the south, and made up in a great degree the straight course of the Nile.' Here we see this river distinguished by its straighter course and southern origin from what was considered as the real Nile, which must therefore have flowed, according to the original information of Herodotus, *απο έσπερης, και ήλιου δυσμεων.*

Ptolemy has been still more misstated. Far from assigning a western course to the Niger, the contrary is implied by his first naming the *Μανδρον ορος* (Manding?), where he lays down a great lake, probably that of Dilbie, and then conducting it to a mountainous region in the centre of Africa, which he calls Thala. Farther he does not trace its course; but he does not say of it, what he expressly says of the Gir, that it terminates in a lake, or sinks under ground. And he also deduces a western branch of the Nile, out of a lake nearly 500 miles distant from its eastern source.

That the Nile and Niger were in some manner connected was the opinion of Edrisi; it is still the uniform opinion of the Arabs; and, if we believe Mr. Jackson's informant, the voyage has been actually made from Timbuctoo to Cairo by persons now alive, (p. 565). To these evidences are opposed the testimony of the people of Dar Fur, communicated to Mr. Browne:—the length, of course, which such a junction would require, (which, however, would hardly, if at all, exceed the Yenisea or Kiang,) and the improbability of so great a distance in the height of Western and Eastern Africa, as to furnish a sufficient fall for its waters. The authority of Mr. Browne's informant in Dar Fur, who had never visited the country where the Nile was supposed to rise, and who was ignorant of the name and productions of Wangara, ought to be taken with caution; and indeed hardly amounts to more than assigning a south-western origin to the Bahrel Abiad, from a mountainous country called Donga, and from the Gibel Kumrie, a name which is also given by the Arabs to the hills whence the Niger springs, and of the meaning of which Mr. Jackson has first given a satisfactory explanation.† To the latter ground of objection, it may be replied, that all we know of the Niger, particularly its vast lakes, implies a descent by no means rapid and opposed by many obstacles. Such lakes, too, it may be observed, are mentioned by the ancients as on the Nile; though in the course of the river, as far as it is at present known, none such are found. Vast marshes are also men-

\* 'Οι δ' Αραβικαι καλουσι, τον δ' Αραπουν αλλον υναι, βιουτα εκ τινων λιμνων εκ μισημ-  
βρίας και σχιδον το κατ' ινθικαν σωμα του Νειλου τουτον ποιουν.

STRAB. l. xvii. p. 786. Paris ed. 1620.

† From their whiteness—Aoud Kumr is a white horse.

tioned;



tioned; and the centurions sent by Nero, whose intelligence was certainly received at the time as authentic, declared that their progress up the river terminated at an extent of water over which the eye could not reach. On the whole, from these lakes, and from the *whiteness* of the Montes Lunæ, a name which might well have been assigned to the ancient Nubians (who were, as Pliny tells us, of \* Arabian origin), the features of this part of Africa may be found to equal in grandeur the gigantic hills and waters of America. To those who may be inclined hereafter to explore these scenes of wonder and peril, Mr. Jackson's hints and information may, we think, be useful. To trust to the Moors, under present circumstances, we apprehend, will be certain ruin; and we must, as Christians, enter our protest solemnly against purchasing their favour by even a pretended apostacy. The advantages of Discovery are too problematical to be worth a crime; nor will a renegado be ever admitted to confidence even by his new friends and masters. From Abyssinia to the westward more favourable openings may perhaps be found; but the only rational hope of making important discoveries, or turning these discoveries to advantage, must be by a powerful establishment on the coast. The necessity of a close alliance with Marocco, if the French should succeed in Spain, will be more obvious than ever. Of Ceuta, perhaps, some advantage may be made; but, under the present circumstances of Africa, it might be not impossible to purchase from the emperor, by an annual tribute, the sovereignty of his distant and revolted province of Suse, the inhabitants of which, it is said, are favourably disposed to the English. With such an establishment, our merchants, as well as the Africans, no longer subject to the caprices of slaves and despots, would trade with safety and confidence, and (what always follows mutual confidence) with mutual probity. A good government, and a respect for the prejudices of Mohammedans, would make Agadeer the emporium of Marocco and Soudan; would gradually accustom the Africans to the appearance and character of Christians; and would, in the course of half a century, be felt in its good effects from the ocean to Wangara.

If an establishment at Suse cannot be effected, the interests of humanity and civilization have still another hope in the progress of the new and mighty empire of Bambarra. Any accession of strength which this may acquire is an additional step to the union of the petty and plundering tribes under one vigorous government; and opening

---

\* *Accolas Nili a Syene, non Ethiopum populos sed Arabum esse dicit usque ad Meroen. Plin. lib. vi. 34.*—This may give probability to the Arabic derivation of Oasis; and the Carthaginians, another race from the same stock, may have given the name of *Atthis* to the snowy mountains of the west. R.

a short and easy road between the Senegal, the Gambia, and the Niger. Till this is effected (and the abolition of the slave trade, by weakening the maritime tribes, will effect it ere long), it is in vain to expect a profitable intercourse through so many savage hordes, and so many natural impediments. A vigorous colony on the Gambia, in alliance with Bambarra, might certainly hasten this desirable object. But the unhealthy climate appears to preclude all great efforts in that quarter, and we are inclined to believe that it is through Marocco and the desert that we may best hope to redress the wrongs of Africa.

---

ART. XX. *Short Remarks on the State of Parties at the close of the Year 1809.* 8vo. pp. 30. Hatchard. 1809.

**T**HIS little *jeu d'esprit* has, as we understand, had a very extensive circulation: but we entertain some doubt whether, among the multitudes who have read it, there are many who have detected its true character and object.

The last instance, so far as we recollect, of a successful deception of this kind in political literature was the famous ironical defence of Lord Shelburne's administration, which, under the title, we believe, of 'A Gleam of Comfort,' was bought up with avidity by his lordship's friends and admirers.

The little work before us, though not under so fascinating a title, appears to us to be written in a similar vein of irony, and may possibly have had a similar success in deluding many friends of the present administration. We do not know whether we are more prudish than others in matters of political morality, but we cannot help wishing to discountenance a species of imposture, which appears to us an illicit mode of warfare, something analogous to carrying false colours, and which, as such, ought to be discouraged by all, of whatever political party or persuasion, who wish for a fair and serious discussion on points which we have all a deep interest in understanding.

To put arguments in the mouth of a political adversary, for the sake of afterwards answering and refuting them—to impute to him errors of reasoning deducible from his conduct, for the sake of afterwards exposing the absurdity of that reasoning, and condemning the conduct founded upon it—are artifices of eloquence fair in themselves, and sanctioned by the practice of the ablest controversial writers; but to assume the very garb and speak in the person of your adversary, and in that disguise to profess on his behalf sentiments probably as foreign to his feelings as they are certainly inconsistent with his character and prejudicial to his interests, is  
unfair