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A

JOURNEY

FROM

INDIA TO ENGLAND,

THROUGH

PERSIA, GEORGIA, RUSSIA, POLAND,

AND

PRUSSIA,

IN THE YEAR 1817.

BY LIEUT. COL. JOHN JOHNSON, C. B.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

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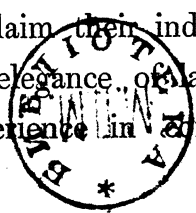
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PREFACE.

THE present Narrative was undertaken for the satisfaction of my family and friends whom I left in India, and was written in the short intervals between quick travelling and rest; at which period also the sketches accompanying it, and many others, were made. As I advanced, I found that the facilities of a journey over-land far exceeded my anticipation, and might perhaps deserve to be generally made known. The many polite attentions also which my fellow-traveller, Captain Salter, and myself received, merely as British officers, from different gentlemen residing at the principal towns on the line of route, excited a feeling of grateful respect that demanded something more than a private and personal acknowledgement. With these inducements to publication was combined an expectation of my own, that a plain record of facts, and of the sentiments and opinions to which they directly gave rise, might in some degree be useful to others, although perhaps not deeply interesting.

In submitting this Journal in its original form to the Public, I must claim their indulgence in regard to any want of refinement or elegance of language, which may have been occasioned by inexperience in composition. I beg leave to observe that



thirty-five years (nearly the whole) of my life have been passed in India; and as most of that time was devoted to the acquisition of local and professional knowledge, very little leisure was left for literary studies, even if opportunities for them had been more frequent: these seldom present themselves to military men in India, whose duties detain them, often for months and sometimes for years, among the natives, without the society of any European.

For the information of future travellers, I have given, in an Appendix, an Itinerary of the route which we pursued, and an account of all expenses incurred between Bombay and London.

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ERRATA.

- Page 3. line 30. *for Delatany, read Delatang.*
 13. l. 6. *for desire, read deserve.*
 45. l. 21. *for was bled, read went to bed.*
 49. l. 17. *for clveo, read clove.*
 83. l. 1. *et seq. for Mayen, read Mayar.*
 117. l. 9. *for Mustaleeh, read Nishtaleek.*
 130. l. 53. *for at Fars, read in Fars.*
 143. l. 25. *for stewed, read strewed.*
 144. l. 24. *after women, insert of distinction.*
 147. l. 1. *for Shaka, read Shahee.*
 147. l. 3. 16. 20. *for Dullaah, read Dullaak.*
 168. l. 3. *for Buzabund, read Bauzubund.*
 187. l. 9. *for plattees, read platters.*
 209. l. 8. *for Selmud, read Sehund.*
 209. l. 9. *for Couvauna, read Arwauna.*
 212. l. 25. *for timbers, read limbers.*
 239. l. 3. *for tiers, read trees.*
 259. l. 4. *for 950, read to 50.*
 267. l. 7. *for timbrel, read tumbrel.*
 268. l. 12. *for six, read sixteen.*
 275. l. 15. *for Kuben, read Kubaun.*
 304. l. 23. and 29. *for Baudicca, read Bardecca.*
 305. l. 14. *for Culguer, read Culgee.*
 318. l. 4. *for Longinskaia, read Louginskaia.*
 324. l. 10. *after a, insert support instead of a.*

JOURNEY, &c.

CHAPTER I.

MOTIVES TO THE JOURNEY. — DEPARTURE FROM BOMBAY IN A MERCHANT VESSEL. — PASSENGERS, ARABS AND INDIANS. — A YOUNG OFFICER IN ILL HEALTH. — MORTALITY OF YOUNG CADETS IN INDIA. — DISCOMFORTS OF THE VESSEL. — DANGER FROM PIRATES. — WATER SPOUTS. — THE SEA RED WITH FISH SPAWN. — ARRIVAL AT MUSCAT. — THE IMAUM. — UNHEALTHINESS OF THE PLACE. — DATE TREES. — MUTTRA. — SLAVES SOLD IN THE BAZAR. — CONDITION OF SLAVES AMONG THE MAHOMEDANS. — COMMODITIES SOLD. — MODE OF FISHING.

AT the time when Captain Salter and I determined to revisit England, many favourable circumstances seemed to combine to render travelling by land not only safe, but peculiarly gratifying to us as British officers. A general peace prevailed throughout Persia and on the continent of Europe, in establishing which the liberal and dignified policy of Great Britain, seconded by the magnanimous efforts of her fleets and armies, had been mainly instrumental. Our national character had become known and respected by foreigners of all countries during those protracted struggles which we were so directly called upon to make, against the projects of aggrandizement pursued by the French, under their brave and skilful commander, Bonaparte. The fame of these successful struggles might be expected to render the appellation of Englishman a sufficient passport through every territory from India to the shores of the Baltic, and an adequate guarantee

for personal security and consideration: such were the anticipations which encouraged us in the outset, and it is gratifying to reflect that they have been amply realised.

As the route which we had chosen led through an inhabited and generally cultivated country, we had few difficulties of magnitude to apprehend; and in travelling through Persia at a season which was still comparatively cold, we hoped that our constitutions would be strengthened and improved. We were also aware that we should have it in our power to make long or short journeys each day, as might suit our convenience or inclination.

From all the information which we were able to collect, we were led to believe that the passage over-land would be neither expensive nor tedious, and that we might perform it at less cost, and in very little more time, than would be required for proceeding home by sea round the Cape. Another considerable advantage incident to the journey, in my estimation, was, that in departing in the middle of February, we should avoid the hot season, which was about to commence in India, as also the winter of the southern hemisphere, which would overtake us at the Cape if we went that way; while, on the other hand, we should find at our arrival in Persia, upon which we might calculate in three weeks, that the most delightful season of the year would commence with our travels. The novelty and variety of interesting objects that might offer themselves to our notice as we advanced, were additional incentives to the choice of this route.

Having determined therefore to proceed over-land from Bushire, and our leave of absence being obtained, we took our passage on board the *Kusroovie*, a merchant vessel of about 360 tons, commanded by Captain Waddington, a mariner well acquainted with the navigation of the Persian Gulf. Our agreement with this gentleman was to pay him 300 rupees each for our accommodation in the round-house; exclusive of which, we engaged to furnish ourselves with wine and liquors, and we had our own servants to attend us. Together with a small stock of linen, we each took an English saddle with holsters, pistols and ammunition.

Besides the numerous merchant vessels navigating between Bombay and the Persian Gulf, there is generally either a frigate or a sloop of war on the latter station ; and the Bombay government send packets regularly every month to Bussora and Bushire, with the over-land despatches. Had we waited about a fortnight longer, we might have taken our passage in the Company's cruiser which was expected to sail in the beginning of March ; but as our minds were now intent on the journey, we, like many travellers, were prone to over-rate every apparent advantage, and make light of all obstacles that affected our design. We concluded that the Kusroovie, from its superior size, would afford us better accommodation than the Company's cruiser, which was about 150 tons ; and we did not duly appreciate the danger to which we should be exposed from the Joasmy pirates, who were said to be at this time in great force at the entrance of the Gulf. There were other inconveniences which we ought to have taken into serious consideration, and which experience taught us to bear in lasting remembrance.

On the 15th of February we embarked. The crew of the vessel were soon collected round the capstan to heave up the anchor, and were quickly joined by a great proportion of Arabs, deck passengers, who formed, together with them, a groupe of as motley, filthy, bristly, beggarly, and raggedly clothed men as ever were seen. I was forcibly struck with the difference of character that existed between the Arab and the native of India. The former, endowed with bodily strength, restrained with few prejudices, active, hardy and intrepid, sought every opportunity of assisting the crew, while the timid Indian, kept aloof by his habitual apathy and timidity in some retired spot, was not easily distinguishable from a heap of foul clothes.

In the cabin with Capt. Salter and myself was a youthful traveller in pursuit of health, Lieut. Deletany of H. M. 17th Dragoons : his motive for the voyage was to prolong his existence at the least possible expense by migrating from India before the approach of the hot seasons, which might have brought on a relapse of the ague and fever still hanging about him, and would have rendered his recovery doubt-