

THE PEOPLE OF THE LEBANON.

The following extracts, taken from a brief account of his residence in the Lebanon mountains, published in the *Revista de Madrid*, by Don Carlos Creas, lately chargé d'affaires at the Court of Portugal, and grandson of the statesman who signed the Seville convention with the Marquis Wellesley in 1805, contain rather interesting details:—

"The Lebanon is inhabited by Maronites and Druses. The former are all Christians, mostly Catholics, excepting the few who profess the Greek rite. The Druses belong to the sect instituted by the dissolute Ha-Kensbi-Arn-Allah, Caliph of Egypt, the origin of which was to organize the repugnant bacchanalian excesses which he indulged in. After his violent death the Druses took refuge in Aleppo, but as their persecutions followed them thither, they ultimately sought an asylum in the rough Lebanon. Their creed is, that there is a God, his prophet the founder of the sect, and that God created the world and a certain number of privileged souls that never perish, which are the Druses, who alone shall enjoy the delights of this earth, whenever the day of general extermination shall arrive, which is to be accomplished by an angel mounted on a green horse. They practice polygamy and incest, marrying their own sisters in preference.

The greatest animosity exists between the Maronite and the Druse, but they unite cheerfully when it becomes necessary to defend the soil. They, born in the midst of precipices and rocks, get accustomed from their earliest age to the hardest fatigues, and the efforts they have to lavish in order to work an arid and ungrateful soil, which only yields its scanty produce in proportion to the immense labour bestowed on it. The sort of life that the configuration of the ground compels them to lead, renders them dexterous and agile. The difficulty which the avenues to penetrate into their country offers, and the asperity of the ground hinders foreigners from frequenting it, and by means of this forced exclusion from intercourse with others they have preserved their original habits. The inhabitant of the Lebanon is, above all, remarkable for his love of independence.

With a warlike character, and oppressed by misery, the inhabitants of the Lebanon often resisted the payment of the unjust taxes with which the Sublime Porte, of which they were tributaries, weighed them down. This resistance brought on continual conflicts, and a year did not pass without the Pachas of Aleppo and St. Jean d'Acre coming to the frontier, destroying the crops and causing other grave injuries to the inhabitants, without, however, ever succeeding in penetrating into the interior.

But towards the middle of the last century, during the reign of the Sultan Selim, a general rebellion sprung up in the Lebanon, which compelled the Porte to send thither upwards of 80,000 men under the orders of various pachas. The mountains thus attacked at different points were defended by the inhabitants with unheard of courage. They proved in a thousand fights, during the seven years of that cruel struggle, that the enemy would never be able to penetrate into the interior. Though the frontier had been irrigated with blood, the interior of the country continued unpoluted, but the necessity of appealing to arms had deprived agriculture of its labourers. The fields became a dreary waste, and the most heart-breaking hunger was causing horrible and awful inroads—the people were reduced to a terrible strait: but the Turks had likewise lost all hopes of reducing such high spirited men by force of arms.

An arrangement took place between the contending parties. The inhabitants of Lebanon agreed to select a mussulman family to be governed by, who would understand with the Sublime Porte as to the tribute that should be paid. The people and their new governors were to settle, among themselves, the manner of levying the taxes, the administration of justice, and other measures, in order to constitute the interior organization of the country.

The Maronites selected the illustrious family of Scheab, established at Damascus, composed at that time of two brothers, both married, whose nobility reached up to Mahomet, whose descendants they were. These princes acceded to the terms on which the people of Lebanon tendered the Government of the mountains, and they fixed their residence in the capital Dyr el Camar. It luckily happened for the mountaineers that this family embraced the Christian religion a few years after, by which means it identified its own interests with those of the country.

It might seem probable that this event should have insured the felicity of the country, by establishing a guarantee that would preserve it from the effects of the suspicion with which the Porte ever looked on the Lebanon, as ready to emancipate itself from its dominion, at the same time that the country saw itself ruled by a family which was deeply interested in its prosperity and welfare.

But, unfortunately, either through inexperience, or that the mountaineers had only thought of repairing the evils that came from abroad, they, at the time of fixing the line of succession, fell into a vast error, that has now become a permanent source of broils and discord, which, at every moment, cover that wretched country with blood, mourning, and grief.

It was only in the event of the total extinction of the family Scheab that it could be succeeded in the government of the Lebanon by that of Ruseilen, a Druse family converted to Christianity, and connected by marriage with the former. Upon the death of the reigning prince, the people assemble at the respective parishes, and point out, as successor, such of his relatives as they deem most entitled to it by virtue of his qualifications, virtues, and courage. And as the family Scheab has become very considerable in point of riches, and numerous in respect of numbers, they all nourish a wish to command. Such of the candidates as do not obtain the legal suffrages of the people, resort to battle in order to obtain, by force of arms, what was lawfully refused. Upon such unfortunate occasions the family divides itself in proportion to the prestige of each of the two rivals, reinforcing their ranks, and a civil war commences, which only terminates in the burning of the eyes and cutting the tongues of the vanquished, this being the punishment imposed by the conqueror.

The most cruel of these civil wars, and which had only terminated a very little while previous to my arrival in the Lebanon, was the one brought about by the Emir Suleiman against his cousin the Emir Beschir. All the Scheab family, as well as the whole of the mountaineers, had taken an active part in it, and it ended by the extermination of the Druse party, which was until then the strongest, and had declared in favour of Prince Suleiman, the preponderance having been obtained by the Maronites, who supported the Emir Beschir. The Emir Suleiman and his brother Faris were consequently conquered, and underwent, in punishment of their bad luck,

the usual operation—namely, that of being deprived of sight and having their tongues cut out.

With the view of becoming acquainted with the details of these events, I determined upon removing to Jadet y Baabda, the residence of the conquered princes. I wrote to Mr. Laurelle, our consul at Beyruth, requesting he would procure me a master who might teach me the Arabic, and taking leave of the kind nuns at Antura, directed my steps to Beyruth, where I heard from the consul, to my infinite satisfaction, that the master he had procured for me was Tannus el Schidrak, who had been secretary and counsellor of the Emir Suleiman, and, of course, well acquainted with every circumstance I wished to know. On the following day I started for my new residence, and in three-quarters of an hour, after having traversed the still and melancholy valley of Pinos, towards sunset I entered the Lebanon, which seemed to my view, as imposing and majestic as the Casrawan. My master awaited me at a small house that had been prepared for me at Jadet, and shortly after my arrival various servants of the Emirs Suleiman and Faris, whose palaces were in the immediate neighbourhood, came to compliment me on behalf of their masters, inviting me to attend the sakra (evening assembly) at the residence of Emir Faris, where the princes met that evening. The invitation was gladly accepted, and attended towards nine o'clock.

It was a summer evening, and I found the princes sitting beneath an immense oak-tree, on the lawn in front of Emir Faris's castle; the Emirs Suleiman and Hussein were with him. The three were deprived of sight in consequence of their rebellion, and, notwithstanding their tongues were cut out, they were able to speak with considerable difficulty. The prince Suleiman could just see a little through the left eye, owing to a circumstance which I shall further on refer to. Their reception of me was most gracious, making me sit by them, and they appeared to vie with each other as to who should show me most attention. Coffee and pipes having been served, the conversation became more animated, the principal topics being politics, religion, wars, and the circumstances in which the country found itself. Besides the three princes already named, there were present their sons and nephews, to the number of seven or eight, and about thirty armed servants were around us, in the attitude of receiving orders, agreeable to the custom of the country.

During our conversation, the Emirs were very expansive, which enabled me to form a conception of their character.

The Emir Suleiman was about 60, but preserving the vigour of his green years. Turbulent and impetuous, he longed for the opportunity of avenging his affront and humiliation, and his uneasy spirit only derived enjoyment from the violent emotions of fights: he was wretched during periods of quiet and peace. He had abjured the Christian faith, and professed, with fanaticism, that of "Islam;" a circumstance he was indebted to for having preserved some faint sight, because the executioner of the terrible punishment dictated by the Emir Beschir was his co-religionist. As all his relatives were Christians, their endeavours to bring him again into the right path gave rise to very obstinate quarrels, owing to the violence of his character.

The Emir Faris, on the contrary, was very mild, and of a quiet and contented disposition, supporting the weight of his misfortunes with truly Christian resignation.

As to the Emir Hussein, considering his want of talent and evident signs of idiotism, it was a matter of admiration to me to hear that he had exposed himself to such an awful punishment, when he must have been sure that he would reap no advantage from the victory.

Our intimacy became great within the next few days. The Emirs, who, though Christians, keep their wives secluded from the society of men; in order to give me a proof of confidence and peculiar esteem, invited me to dine at their harems, a favour that is only dispensed to the members of their families.

One of the members of the family Scheab, who used frequently to come and see me, evincing a desire of rendering our friendship more intimate, was the Emir * * *, a young man of 25 years of age, of an agreeable, if not very intellectual countenance; he had often told me that, in order not to be behind his uncles in proofs of confidence, he wanted to present me to his princess, whose beauty he greatly praised. I had often heard the beauty of the Emira Negem lauded, and as whenever she had been spoken of within my hearing it had been done with a significant meaning, I became anxious to see her, in order to fathom the mystery which evidently was some how or other connected with her.

On the day following that of my telling the Emir * * * that I should call and pay my respects to his wife, I bended my steps towards his castle, situated about 2,000 yards from my residence, at the entrance of the town and on a small eminence. Having gone into the house, and being about retiring, upon finding that the Emir was from home, on a shooting excursion, a servant came up stating that his lady desired me to proceed through the apartments. I then went on, guided by the said domestic, until we reached a vast saloon adorned with a low divan that went round the four walls, in an angle of which, reclining on a large cushion next to a window, the princess was sitting, holding in one hand the long tube of narquile (a sort of glass pipe through which the water cools the smoke previous to its reaching the mouth) that was placed in the middle of the saloon. When I presented myself before her, she rose, and with an angelical voice said 'Ahlan y Sahlan,' (you are welcome). Obeying her orders, I sat by her side, and with enchanting gracefulness she put to me all the variety of questions with which women, with such little trouble, know how to entangle and captivate our thoughts. It did not require long to perceive that she was gifted with a fertile and quick imagination, which met a singular contrast in the sterility of her husband's mind. She sent for his sisters and presented them to me, being girls of 15 and 16 years of age, to whom my presence caused considerable bashfulness, a circumstance that gave some merriment to their sister-in-law, who, feeling for their awkwardness, shortly after gave them leave to withdraw from the saloon.

The Emira Negem again put more questions regarding our European habits, wondering at the liberty that our women enjoy, insinuating, with some malice, that they would probably use it to the prejudice of their husbands. Upon my replying that the high walls within which the oriental women live are not a sure or infallible protection to their husbands, the princess remarked that women are worse than the devil (*kasharr-min el chitan*.) The conversation continued verging on various objects, which enabled me to discover in the amiable interlocutor a festive disposition, a sagacious understanding, kind and ladylike manners, that might well have stood the test with one of our paragons of

fashion and high society. Her figure was no ways inferior to what fame said respecting it; she was about 24 years of age, and might pass for a beauty of the first class; her beautiful form was set off to very great advantage by the dress of a Persian slave which she wore. Her very opportune remarks upon things that she heard for the first time in her life greatly surprised me, and she had a winning manner of conveying whatever she said.

Among other things the Emira inquired whether our women took an active part in our wars. I replied in the affirmative, acquainting her that my country, Spain, had given birth to great heroines; in reply to the like question from me, she replied that such was the case in her country, and that but for her, the Emir * * *, her husband, would not now be living. Pressing her for further particulars, the Emira replied, "Because I caused a brother of my husband, whom the latter did not dare to fight, to be murdered."

Supposing from the silence that the awful surprise caused by her declaration compelled me to observe for a while, that I was curious to learn the details of the bloody history she was going to relate, the princess rose and told me to follow her. Going to the opposite window, from which we could see the rests of an encampment on a mountain at a quarter of a mile distance: "That mountain you behold," said she, "was the spot where the Emir Selim had fixed his head quarters; besides having sided with our enemies in the recent war, he aimed at dispossessing my husband, his brother, of his patrimony. My husband, not having sufficient courage to do it himself, intrusted me with the duty of fighting him, and the ground that lies between the castle and the mountain is irrigated with blood lost in the fights that I have headed, sometimes to repulse his attacks, others to attack him in his own positions."

"After many conflicts I became persuaded that our adversary was not sufficiently powerful to overcome us, nor had we sufficient force to compel him to abandon a spot from whence he caused us grave inconvenience. In this cruel alternative I resolved to have him assassinated, for which purpose I caused proposals of peace to be submitted to him, which he admitted, because, purposely, the terms proposed were most advantageous to him. He came to our castle, for the purpose of concluding the terms, and I determined to realise my project upon the very night of his supping with us. My faithful Selim was the only one in the secret, and it was he that had to execute my design." I then remembered that the favourite servant of the house, a stout young man of 30, with black eyes and a ferocious look, was called Selim. "In order that you may the better know the details of this scene," continued the princess, "I shall conduct you to the spot where the murder took place." The Emira directed her course through several dark corridors, where I followed her, descending with her a very dark staircase, with an immediate inlet into a saloon, the windows of which opened on a precipice. Arriving into the apartment, the Emira told me that it was the one destined for the Emir Selim. "It was here that I caused him to be assassinated." When the hour of going to rest arrived, we allowed him to go, taking great care to dispel every possible suspicion from his mind. Whilst he undressed, I, continued the princess, with a faltering voice, "was giving my last orders. According to previous ones all arms within his reach had been removed to a room where we would have taken refuge if our object had failed, in order to defend ourselves from Selim and his followers."

"When the hour marked out by his destiny had arrived," continued that singular woman, "Selim, armed with pistols and sword, and I, descended by that very same staircase. We listened at the door, which was half open, in order to ascertain if he was sleeping, trembling that he might detect our project, because, in such an event, we must have been the victims of his ferocity, because his courage and dexterity in the management of arms did not leave me the least hope that Selim could, successfully, grapple with him. At length his snore indicated that the traitor slept. Selim went in, and shortly after I heard the discharge of a pistol; I rushed into the room, and by means of the lighted lamp I beheld our enemy bathed in his own blood, and that Selim was finishing him with his sabre. I caused the corpse to be hurled down that window, and, immediately after, at the head of my armed servants, I made prisoners of the few who had accompanied the Emir, until his troops dispersed themselves."

I hurried out of that house of crime, cursing the destiny which gave such lovely forms to conceal so perverse and cruel a heart as that of the princess must have been."

AN AGE OF PAMPHLETS.—The age of Charles the First may be characterised as the age of pamphlets. Of that remarkable period, we possess in the British Museum an extraordinary collection, which amounts to about thirty thousand pieces, uniformly bound in two thousand volumes of various sizes, accompanied by twelve folio volumes of the catalogue chronologically arranged, exhibiting their full titles. Even the date of the day is noted when each pamphlet was published. It includes a hundred in manuscript written on the King's side, which at the time were not allowed to be printed. The formation of this collection is a romantic incident in the annals of Bibliography. In that critical year 1640, a bookseller of the name of Thomason conceived the idea of preserving, in that new age of contested principles, an unbroken chain of men's arguments, and men's doings. We may suppose that this collector, commencing with the year 1640, and continuing without omission or interruption to the year 1660, could not at first have imagined the vast career he had to run; there was, perhaps, sagacity in the first thought, but there was far more intrepidity in never relinquishing this favourite object during these perilous twenty years, amid a conflict of costly expenditure, of personal danger, and almost insurmountable difficulties. The design was carried on in secrecy through confidential servants, who at first buried the volumes as they collected them; but they soon became too numerous for such a mode of concealment. The owner, dreading that the ruling government would seize on the collection, watched the movements of the army of the Commonwealth, and carried this itinerant library in a very opposite direction. Many were its removals, northward or eastward, but the danger became so great, and the collection so bulky, that he had at one time an intention to pass them over into Holland, but feared to trust his treasure to the waves. He at length determined to place them in his warehouses, in the form of tables round the room, covered with canvass. It is evident that the loyalty of the man rendered him a suspected person; for he was once dragged from his bed, and imprisoned for seven weeks, during which time, however, the collection suffered no interruption, nor was the secret betrayed. The secret was, however, evident-

ly not unknown to some faithful servants of the king; for when, in 1647, his Majesty at Hampton Court desired to see a particular pamphlet, it was obtained for him from this collection, though the collector was somewhat chary of the loan, fearing the loss of what he felt as a limb of his body, not probably recoverable. The King had the volume with him in his flight, towards the Isle of Wight; but it was returned to the owner, with his Majesty's earnest exhortation that he should diligently continue the collection. A slight accident which happened to the volume occasioned the collector to leave this interesting incident on record. When Cromwell ruled, a place of greater security was sought for than the owner's warehouses; a fictitious sale was made to the University of Oxford, who would be more able to struggle for their preservation than a private individual, if the Protector discovered and claimed these distracted documents of the history of his own times. Mr. Thomason lived to complete his design; he witnessed the restoration, and died in 1666, leaving his important collection, which was still lodged at Oxford, and which he describes in his will "as not to be parcelled," in trust, to be sold for the benefit of his children. His will affords an evidence that he was a person of warm patriotic feelings, with a singular turn of mind, for he left a stipend of forty shillings for two sermons to be annually preached, one of which was to commemorate the destruction of the Armada.—*D'Israeli*.

LAW OF ADVERTISING.—A decision has recently been made in England, which we doubt not would be strictly followed in a similar case in this country. From this is apparent the necessity that advertisers should accompany their communications with explicit directions. The case is as follows:

Court of Requests. *O'Connell vs. Stokes*.—This was an action (brought by the plaintiff, a newspaper proprietor, against the defendant, who had occasion to advertise in his paper) to recover the amount of an advertisement which had been inserted forty-five times, on the ground that the advertisement had been intended for one insertion only. The manuscript order was produced, and appeared indefinite. The case had been some time under the consideration of his Honor, who, in anxiety that strict justice should be done between proprietors of newspapers and the public, had taken the opinion of two Judges on the subject, and agreed with them in deciding that newspaper proprietors were justified in continuing the insertion of advertisements, not ordered for any specific number of times, until it was ordered to be withdrawn. His honor said, it was desirable that the public should be made acquainted with this decision, in order that persons having occasion to advertise may be aware of the necessity of stating on their orders the number of insertions they may require. If they neglect to do so, it was unreasonable to expect newspaper proprietors to attend to that which was clearly the advertiser's own business. A verdict was then entered for the plaintiff.

TAKING IT COOLLY.—A Western editor, describing the bursting of a cannon, by which several persons were badly wounded, says: "Our reporter, who had his hand blown off, was fortunately on the spot, and has narrated to us the full particulars of the catastrophe."

In some parts of India, it is common to allow an iron hook to be drawn through the integuments of the foot, by means of which they are swung head round for a considerable time, at a great height from the ground. This and other lacerations of the flesh, common in their idolatrous observances, however, soon heal again, owing to the habitual temperance of the people. Let a London brewer's drayman, or a cooper in a Montreal wholesale Grocery and Liquor Store, however, get even a very slight wound, and the most serious consequences are likely to ensue. In the language of a celebrated Physician, "the lips of the wound show no greater disposition to adhere, than if they were brickbats." We may add, that we have heard it stated as a well known fact, that an external injury which would cause a Frenchman no trouble whatever, is generally speaking, in an Englishman a very troublesome, if not dangerous affair, and this is attributed chiefly to the quantity of mal liquors which the latter has been in the habit of consuming, and which never fails to leave the humours in a highly vitiated state.—*Canada Temperance Advocate*.

We have heard a complaint made against tea-totallers, which is not altogether groundless, namely: that they become so completely immersed in business, as to have little or no time left for temperance efforts; and those of them who were wretched, ragged, riotous drunkards, become so respectable, that they do not like to confess their former course of life, though by telling their own experience, they might probably reclaim others.—*Jb*.

THE CHINESE NAVAL FORCE.—The Chinese Navy scarcely deserves so important an epithet. Their war junks or "soldiers' ships" are about two hundred tons burden, with two masts and as many sails, which are hoisted and lowered in a series of tiers or folds. Their form is rather more compact than that of the common junks, but still very awkward and unwieldy. A great deal of timber, with very little firmness in construction, or principle in workmanship, is the principle of Chinese ship-building. Enormous beams run from stem to stern and from side to side, to give stability to the whole, or rather to keep the different parts of the fabric together. But as the ribs and timbers are hung in some measure to these beams, if a heavy shot should happen to displace one of them, the soundness of the entire framework would be endangered. The bulwarks or parapet are high towards the end of the vessel, and are cut away in the waist or middle where the guns are ranged. The guns are few in number and inconsiderable in size, the largest not more than a twelve-pounder. They are mounted upon wooden carriages, and are incapable of elevation or depression.—In the short action at Cheuenpe, most of the shots ranged among the sails and rigging of the Hyacinth and *Voyage* and consequently did very little damage. As China is populous, these junks usually carry a great many men, who, from a natural facility, can be stowed in very close compass; but their seamanship has but little scope, as the masts and rigging are very simple. For this reason the design of employing foreign vessels was dropped, as in the hands of native sailors they would only have been as many enclosures where several hundred human beings were shut up in readiness to be sent to the bottom at the discretion of the enemy.—*Mr Laine's Chinese as they are*.

LARD LAMPS.—The use of lard for burning in lamps as a substitute for oil, is becoming very general in this region. It is a great saving of expense, and we prefer the lard lamps to any other light we have used.—*American paper*.