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The following account of a work which has lately appeared in France, entitled "*Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt; undertaken by order of the old government of France—by* C. S. Sonnini," is taken from a Britiſh Journal.

THE travels of Sonnini have attracted greater notice than they otherwiſe would have excited, becauſe his obſervations are ſuppoſed to have ſuggeſted to the rulers of France the firſt idea of the expedition to Egypt. It is probable, from internal evidence, that their publication at this time is intended to exaggerate the beauties of that famous country, to magnify its advantages, and diminiſh the dread of the dangers and inconveniences of the climate.

It is M. Sonnini's profeſſed object to deſcribe Egypt as it was when the French took poſſeſſion of it; to compare its degraded ſtate at that period with the ſpendor which it was to re-aſſume, when it ſhould again attain its ancient proſperity. Our author had travelled before through various countries; and had learned to bear the unavoidable fatigues and inconveniences inſeparable from ſuch expeditions in inhoſpitable climates, to examine with due attention the different objects, and, when national vanity did not interfere, to appreciate them with judgment. Lower Egypt was not a new object; but of Upper Egypt, at the time of his travels, little was known. We have ſince acquired more ſatisfactory information, particularly from the late travels of Mr. Browne, and, with the additions which our author's curious and attentive ſurvey ſupplies, can more juſtly eſtimate many ancient as well as more modern accounts. We may add, that M. Sonnini is a naturaliſt of no mean rank. His eyes are conſtantly directed to the different objects which Nature preſents in her three kingdoms; and a part of his work is a ſupplement to Proſper Alpinus, to Haſſelquiſt, and Forſkal. Should Abdollatiph's deſcription of this counrry ever eſcape from the cabinet of Dr. White, our author would be a proper editor of what relates to natural hiſtory.

As our principal object is Egypt, we ſhall paſs curſorily over the incidents previous to the author's arrival. The narrative, however, is pleaſing and intereſting; and the various objects of natural hiſtory which he has noticed, agreeably diverſify it. It was the opinion of Buffon, that the Mediterranean was once a ſmall inland lake, and that it was enlarged to its preſent extent by the burſting of the Euxine through the Boſporus, and of the Atlantic through the Strait of Gibraltar. M. Sonnini thinks he has found a confirmation of this opinion in the ſoundings between Sicily and Malta, and again between Malta and Cape Bon in Africa, which ſeldom exceed thirty, and never one hundred fathoms. The alleged circumſtances ſeem to ſhow that the eaſtern ſide of the Mediterranean has been gained from the continent.

The account of Malta and its productions is intereſtiog; the political obſervations, the author ſays, are of weight only 'in the old order of things;' but what may reſult from the confuſion we know not. The knights of Malta may be preſerved in their name; but their order is no more.

Having deſcribed the approach to the coaſt of Egypt, our author points out the advantages of the ſituation diſcovered by the penetrating genius of Alexander, when he fixed on the ſpot which ſtill bears his name, though the modern Alexandria is only the ſhadow of the ancient.

'The new city, or rather the town of Alexandria, is principally built upon the ſea-ſhore. The houſes, like all thoſe of the Levant, have terraced roofs; the holes that ſerve as windows, are almoſt entirely blocked up by a wooden lattice, projecting in different forms, and ſo cloſe, that it is hardly poſſible for the light to enter. In this country above all others, ſuch inventions, which transform habitations into priſons, are real *jalouſies**. It is through this ſymmetrical, and ſometimes not inelegant arrangement of bars, that the fair ſex can ſee what is paſſing out of doors, without being ſeen. It is in this kind of everlaſting cloiſter, that beauty, far from being paid that homage which nature intended it ſhould receive from every heart of ſenſibility, experiences nothing but contempt and outrage; it is there, in ſhort, that one portion of mankind, taking advantage of the odious right of the ſtrongeſt, keeps in a humiliating ſtate of ſlavery the other portion, whoſe charms would alone be capable of ſoftening the rugged nature of the ſoil, and the ferocity of its poſſeſſors.

* '*Jalouſie*, i. e. jealouſy, is the French word for a lattice window, or Venetian blind.'

'The narrow and irregular ſtreets of Alexandria are equally deſtitute of pavement and polite: no public edifice, no private building, arreſts the eye of the paſſenger; and were not the ruins of the ancient city in exiſtence, he would meet with nothing to attract his attention. Turks, Arabs, Moors, Copts, Chriſtians of Syria, and Jews, compoſe a population, which may amount to five thouſand ſouls, as far at leaſt as it was poſſible to judge, in a country where no regiſter of any kind is kept. Beſides, commerce brings thither, from all the countries of the Eaſt, foreigners, who make only a momentary ſtay. This confuſed aſſemblage of men of different nations, jealous, and almoſt always enemies of one another, would afford to an obſerver a ſingular mixture of dreſſes and manners, provided a den of thieves could be worthy of this obſervation.

'They are ſeen crowding in the ſtreets, and running rather than walking; they bawl alſo rather than ſpeak. I often ſtopped near perſons who appeared to me incenſed with rage: they gave their voice all the force it could derive from a ſtrong and ample cheſt; their countenance bore all the marks of paſſion; their eyes ſparkled; and violent geſtures accompanied words which ſeemed ſtill more violent. I approached, expecting to ſee them cut one another's throats in a moment; & found that nothing was in queſtion but a bargain of ſmall importance; that not one of their expreſſions was of a threatening tenor; and that all this uproar was nothing more than their uſual manner of cheapening any thing they meant to buy.

'This cuſtom of giving the voice the greateſt poſſible force in ſpeaking, is common to almoſt all the oriental nations, excepting the Turks, whoſe demeanor is more grave and ſedate. There are few people, perhaps, who have not remarked, that the Jews, a nation which has contrived to preſerve its character and cuſtoms in all the countries through which it is diſperſed; there are few who have not remarked, that they alſo ſpeak very loud, particularly to one another. Excepting a few individuals, whoſe conſtraint in the imitation of our manners plainly ſhews that they are aſſumed, we alſo ſee them, when they walk our ſtreets, going with their bodies leaning forward, and their knees ſtraight, taking quick and ſhort ſteps which rather reſemble a run than a walk. In Egypt, where they live in greater ſubjection than elſewhere, they are exactly the ſame as we are accuſtomed to ſee them, avaricious, artful and paltry knaves. Their ſchemes of plunder are not, like thoſe of the Bedonians, and other robbers of Egypt, put in practice openly and by main force. It is, as with us, by cheating with addreſs, and by thieving in the way of buſineſs, that they fill their own purſe, and quietly empty that of their neighbour. It is thus that the Jews have appeared to me, wherever I have met them. In every part of the world they are diſtinguiſhed by their peculiar vices, which they have drawn between themſelves and other nations. In every part of the world they are alſo ſeen to employ the ſame low means, the ſame deceit, and the ſame knavery, which makes them real peſts in ſociety; in ſhort, they every where diſplay the ſame inſenſibility and the ſame ingratitude with which they have, in theſe latter times, repaid the generoſity and magnanimous conduct of France.'

The ancient monuments of Grecian artiſts, in the beſt ages of Grecian taſte, lie now diſperſed, covered with ſand, or forming a part of the walls, the rude huts, or other buildings, of the modern Arabs and Egyptians. The preſent fortifications are Arabian; and their ſtrength is magnified, to add to the laurels of the conſul Buonaparte. Pompey's Pillar and Cleopatra's Needle ſhare the author's attention; and he adds ſome minute circumſtances to the deſcriptions of former travellers.

The ſituation of Alexandria was once delightful. Canals from different parts of the Nile, and the neighbouring Lake Mareotis, formerly watered numerous gardens, kept with the moſt anxious care. Indeed, the former ſtate of Egypt muſt have been very different from the preſent, ſince ancient travellers ſpeak of its cultivated fields and gardens with enthuſiaſm. Such it may be again; for, whatever may be the event of the French expedition, the importance of Egypt to our Aſiatic colonies is now generally acknowledged. This ancient medium of connection between Europe and India will probably be renewed; and the ſcene of deſolation mentioned in the following quotation may yield to more pleaſing proſpects.

'Nothing remains but the canal of Lower Egypt, and even that is in a ruinous ſtate. During the inundation it receives the water of the Nile at Latf, oppoſite Fouah, and has three bridges over it of modern conſtruction. Near the former, by the ſea-ſide, is the entrance of the ſubterraneous aqueduct that carries the proviſion of water of the Alexandrians into the ciſterns, the arches of which ſupported the whole extent of the ancient city, and which every one concurred in conſidering as one of the moſt beautiful monuments in the world. The mouth of this aqueduct is blocked up; but when the water of the canal had attained a certain height, in conſequence of the riſe of the river, the principal magiſtrates of the town went in great ceremony to break down the dam. When the ciſterns were full, it was again built up, and the water of the canal continued to fall into the ſea at the old port It was by means of ſo eaſy a communication that the conveyance of merchandize was formerly effected throughout Egypt. The dangerous paſſage of the mouth of the Nile was thus avoided, as well as the perils of the ſea. When I was at Alexandria, in 1778, not more than a century had elapſed ſince it had been navigable for boats; but this canal, the advantages of which are ineſtimable, was neglected by barbarians who were blind to their true intereſts. The walls which ſupported the banks were falling every day into ruins; the pavement at the bottom was covered with ſucceſſive coats of mud, and no boat could any longer ſwim in it. A yellow and diſguſting ſtream would ſoon have ceaſed to reach the ciſterns, which were themſelves half deſtroyed; the inhabitants would have ſoon experienced a total want of water; and modern Alexandria would have ſunk into the ſand, and have become the haunt of ſavage animals, which ſeemed already to threaten it, while prowling round its walls.

The banks of the canal are animated by ſome of the richeſt productions of living nature; farther on ſhe appears dead. On every ſide there is nothing but ſands, rocks, and ſterility. Trees and ſhrubs grow by the water-ſide, and ſome patches of verdure are ſcattered about the environs. A few wandering ſtreams carry fertility to fields where barley is ſown, and where different kinds of vegetables are cultivated, particularly a great number of artichokes. The cultivation of this diſtrict formerly extended much farther; and it would have been eaſy for the modern Alexandrians to have enlarged its limits; but they diſcovered no activity, unleſs in pillage; nor is it ſurpriſing that people who made no effort to preſerve the only water that was drinkable, ſhould have neglected the means of procuring themſelves comfort and abundance.

Theſe are veſtiges of the culture which ſurrounded ancient Alexandria; theſe are the remains of thoſe delightful gardens which added to its magnificence, and the beauty of which Abulfeda ſtill extolled in the time of the Arabs. A few trees ſcattered here and there, and ſcarcely vegetating upon this ſandy ſhore, and far from ſufficient to conceal its aridity and nakedneſs: ſeveral ſpecies of ſoda, ſalt and acrid plants, of which the Arabian name, *kali*, has been given to alkaline ſubſtances, are almoſt the only ones that thrive upon this coaſt, and there they may rather be ſaid to creep than grow. The Alexandrians burn them, and extract from their aſhes a fixed ſalt, which is an article of commerce.

In the account of the route of the merchants, and the dangers of paſſing from Alexandria to Roſetta, or Raſhid, there is ſome novelty. Our author performed this journey through a comparative deſert, by land; and Savary, who never travelled through any other deſert, applies all the horrors of the Nubian deſerts to this between Alexandria and Roſetta, in which no ſuch dangers occur.

Roſetta is ſituated in a plain of aſtoniſhing fertility. Every vegetable grows in ſpotaneous luxuriance; e ery bird, which by its plumage can charm the eye, or by its notes pleaſe the ear, adds to the enjoyment. Sedition and inſurrection dare not invade this paradiſe: all is peace and calmneſs. The picture is too highly embelliſhed to be a faithful copy. Nature mixes thorns with her roſes; and the luxuriant ſoil, which gives verdure to the trees, nouriſhes the ſerpent beneath. Roſetta is undoubtedly the moſt fertile ſpot of Lower Egypt? yet we know that it has its inconveniences; and our author has not always been able to conceal them. He haſtened from that town to Cairo; but the inſurrections and other diſorders of this city, the numerous parties, which in this inteſtine warfare infeſted the Said, prevented him from accompliſhing his deſign of reaching Upper Egypt. He returned, therefore, for a time to Roſetta, infeſted with the gnats during his two-day's voyage on the Nile, and chilled by the early fogs of a winter, which, however, he contends, has little terrible, but its name. He deſcribes minutely the culture of rice in Egypt, which he thinks would not ſucceed in France, and engages in the controverſy, whether rice was known to the ancient Egyptians; treating Mr. Pauw's wild and inconſiderate aſſertions with proper contempt. The oxen of Egypt, he ſays, are not ſo remarkable for their beauty as travellers have repreſented.

The inhabitants of Roſetta are deſcribed with ſome minuteneſs; and the women, ſecluded as they are in all eaſtern countries, ſeem on this account to have proved more faſcinating in our author's eyes. Even the embonpoint, ſo pleaſing in Aſia, is accompanied, in his opinion, by a firmneſs and elaſticity, which give it charms unknown to Europeans. The Turks, in Egypt, do not differ from thoſe in other countries. They are the ſame ſedate, indolent, jealous race; but their deteſtable propenſities ſeem in this genial climate, to be more general, and leſs governable.

Cats and dogs are numerous in Egypt; the former are as much careſſed as the latter are deteſted; for a cat was the favorite animal of Mohammed. The animals of that country, in general, though ſpirited, are docile and familiar: bred up in the tents of the Bedouins, they are the early companions and friends of mankind. The ichneumon is not domeſticated in Egypt, as has been aſſerted; for, if it deſtroys rats, it alſo devours poultry. It is not particularly inimical to the crocodile; for it feeds on all ſorts of reptiles. It is not an argument to ſay that the ichneumon abounds in Lower Egypt, where there are few crocodiles, and is rare in the higher parts, where crocodiles abound; for this reptile was once more common near the ſea, as we learn from the more ancient travellers. It is now often found below the cataracts, in Upper Egypt, contrary to the obſervation of Dr. Shaw, as our author properly remarks. The thirſe, a ſpecies of tortoiſe, is the greateſt real enemy of the crocodile, devouring the young of this race with great greedineſs, and in great numbers.

M. Sonnini's account of the birds of Egypt is peculiarly intereſting, as collected from his own obſervation, and accurate, as this part of natural hiſtory has claimed his