

instigated by Hera to vie with the Muses in singing; the Muses were victorious, and plucked the feathers from the Sirens and made crowns for themselves out of them. In art they are usually represented with the bodies of women and the legs of birds, with or without wings. More rarely they appear as birds with only the heads of women. They seem to have had a funeral significance, and were often represented on tombs. For representations of them see J. E. Harrison, *Myths of the Odyssey*.

SIRICIUS, pope from December 384 till November 398, was the successor of Damasus and was himself succeeded by Anastasius I. See **POPEDOM**, vol. xix. p. 491.

SIRMŪR, one of the sub-Himalayan or Simla hill states under the government of the Punjab, lying between 30° 24' and 31° N. lat. and between 77° 5' and 77° 50' E. long. Its area is 1096 square miles, and it is bounded on the N. by the hill states of Balsan and Jubal, on the E. by the British district of Dehra Dun, from which it is separated by the rivers Tons and Jumna, on the S.W. by Ambala district, and on the N.W. by the states of Patiala and Keunthál. Except a very small tract about Nahan, the chief town and residence of the raja, on the south-western extremity, where a few streams rise and flow south-westward to the Saraswati and Ghaggar rivers, the whole of Sirmūr lies in the basin of the Jumna, which receives from this tract the Giri and its feeders the Jalál and the Palúr. The Tons, the great western arm of the stream called lower down the Jumna, flows along the eastern boundary of Sirmūr, and on the right side receives from it the two small streams Minus and Nairai. The surface generally declines in elevation from north to south; the chief elevations on the northern frontier (Chor peak and station) are about 12,000 feet above the sea. The valley of the Khiánda Dún, which forms the southern part of the state, is bounded on the S. by the Siwalik range, the hills of which are of recent formation and abound in fossil remains of large vertebrate animals. Though the rocks of Sirmūr consist of formations usually metalliferous, the yield of mineral wealth is at present but small. The forests are very dense, so much so that the sportsman finds difficulty in making his way through them in search of wild elephants, tigers, leopards, bears, and hyænas, with which they abound. The climate of Sirmūr varies with the elevation; the northern extremity has very little rain; but large and excellent crops are everywhere to be obtained by irrigation.

The population in 1881 was 112,371 (males 63,305, females 49,066), the great majority being Hindus. The only town of any importance is Nahan, with a population of 5253. The principal products of the state are opium, tobacco, and cereals, and its gross revenue is estimated at £21,000. Sirmūr, which means "a crowned head," was the place of residence of the rajas who ruled over the state before the present dynasty entered the country. The reigning raja (Shamsher Prakash, K.C.S.I.) holds his possessions by a grant made on the expulsion of the Gúrkhas by the British in 1815.

SIROHI, or **SEEROE**, a native state in the Rájputána agency under the Government of India, with an area of 3020 square miles, lying between 24° 20' and 25° 20' N. lat. and between 72° 10' and 73° 10' E. long., and bounded on the W. and N. by Márwár or Jodhpur, on the E. by Mewár or Udáipur, on the S. by Pálanpur and the Mahi Kántha states of Edar and Dánta. The country is much broken up by hills and rocky ranges; the Aravalli range divides it into two portions, running from north-east to south-west. The south and south-east part of the territory is very mountainous and rugged, containing the lofty Mount Abu, an isolated mass of granite rock, culminating in a cluster of hills, enclosing several valleys surrounded by rocky ridges, like great hollows. The highest peak rises to 6553 feet above sea-level, and is one of the great trigonometrical stations. On both sides of the Aravallis

the country is intersected with numerous water channels, which run with considerable force and volume during the height of the rainy season, but are dry for the greater part of the year. The only river of any importance is the Western Banás. A large portion of the state is covered with dense jungle, in which wild animals, including the tiger, bear, and leopard, abound. Many splendid ruins bear witness to the former prosperity and civilization of the state. The climate is on the whole dry; in the south and east there is usually a fair amount of rain. On Abu the average annual rainfall is about 64 inches, whereas in Erinpura, less than 50 miles to the north, the average fall is only between 12 and 13 inches. The Western Rájputána Railway runs through the length of the state, passing just east of Mount Abu.

In 1881 the population numbered 142,903 (males 70,132, females 66,771), of whom 123,633 were Hindus, 2935 were Mohammedans, and 16,137 were Jains. The town of Siróhi, the capital of the state, is situated at the western base of the range of hills north of Mount Abu, and its population (1881) numbered 5699. Wheat and barley are the staple crops; pulses and cotton are also grown. The present ruling family of Siróhi are Deora Rájputs, a branch of the great Chauhán clan, and are said to be immediately descended from Deo Ráj, a descendant of Pírhvi Ráj, the Chauhán king of Delhi. During the early years of the present century Siróhi suffered much from wars with Jodhpur and the wild Mína hill tribes. The protection of the British was sought in 1817; the pretensions of Jodhpur to suzerainty over Siróhi were disallowed, and in 1823 a treaty was concluded with the British Government. For services rendered during the mutiny of 1857 the reigning "rao" received a remission of half his tribute.

SÍRSA, a British district in the lieutenant-governorship of the Punjab, lying between 29° 13' and 30° 40' N. lat. and between 73° 57' and 75° 23' E. long. It has an area of 3008 square miles, and is bounded on the N. by Firozpur district and the native state of Patiala, on the W. by the river Sutlej, on the S.W. by the native states of Baháwalpur and Bikaner, and on the E. by Hissar district. Lying as it does between the barren deserts of Bikaner and the comparatively fertile though sandy plains of the Cis-Sutlej states, Sírsa district in soil as well as position forms an intermediate link between the two. It forms for the most part a bare and treeless plateau stretching from the valley of the little river Ghaggar on the east to the main stream of the Sutlej on its western border. In the immediate neighbourhood of the Sutlej, however, is a fertile alluvial tract (*khádar*), intersected by numerous branches of the river, and flooded by their outflow during the rainy season. Eastward of the khádar lies the sandy central tableland, which is chiefly employed for purposes of pasturage. East of this plateau is the valley of the Ghaggar, a formidable torrent in the rainy months, but so entirely dependent on the rainfall of the lower Himalayas that it is usually dry from October to July. The Ghaggar expands into three jhils or marshy lakes, the largest of which is 5 miles in length by 2 in breadth. South of the Ghaggar spreads a sandy tract beyond the reach of its fertilizing influence, and of small agricultural value. Formerly the district was covered by an excellent grazing grass, known as *dháman*, but with the increase of cultivation it is fast disappearing. The climate of Sírsa is extremely dry, the average annual rainfall reaching only 15 inches. The Rewari-Ferozepore Railway passes through the district from south to north.

The population of the district, according to the census of 1881, was 253,275 (males 138,691, females 114,584), of whom 130,582 were Hindus, 93,289 Mohammedans, and 28,303 Sikhs. The only town with a population exceeding 10,000 is Sírsa, the administrative headquarters of the district, with 12,292 inhabitants. The modern town of Sírsa was founded in 1837, and the ruins of old Sírsa lie near its south-west corner. It is a considerable entrepôt for the trade of the wheat-growing countries to the north and east with Bikaner and Márwár. At the opening of the present century nearly the whole of Sírsa district was a barren almost uncultivated waste. Gradually, however, with more peaceful times

cultivation has again extended. Of the total area 1353 square miles are now cultivated and 1548 square miles are cultivable. The staple product is bajra, which in 1882-83 occupied 546,905 acres; the other principal crops are joar, barley, and wheat. The district has little trade except in agricultural produce, which goes chiefly to Bikaner; and the only manufacture of any importance is that of *sajji*, an impure carbonate of soda, used in washing and dyeing cloth. Sírsa was officially included in the territory conquered from the Mahrattas in 1803, when it was almost entirely uninhabited. It required reconquering from the Bhattis in 1818; but it did not come under British administration until 1837. During the mutiny of 1857 Sírsa was for a time wholly lost to British rule. On the restoration of order the district was administered by Punjab officials, and in the following year, with the remainder of the Delhi territory, it was formally annexed to that province.

SISKIN (Dan. *Sidsken*; Germ. *Zeisig* and *Zeising*), long known in England as a cage-bird, since, in 1544, Turner mentioned it in that character under this name,¹ and said that he had only once met with it at large—the *Fringilla spinus* of Linnæus, and *Carduelis* or *Chrysomitris spinus* of modern writers. In some of its structural characters it is most nearly allied to the **GOLDFINCH** (vol. x. p. 758), and both are often placed in the same genus by systematists; but in its style of coloration, and still more in its habits, it resembles the **Redpolls** (cf. **LINNET**, vol. xiv. p. 675), though without their slender figure, being indeed rather short and stout of build. Yet it hardly yields to them in activity or in the grace of its actions, as it seeks its food from the catkins of the alder or birch, regardless of the attitude it assumes while so doing. Of an olive-green above, deeply tinted in some parts with black and in others lightened by yellow, and beneath of a yellowish-white again marked with black, the male of this species has at least a becoming if not a brilliant garb, and possesses a song that is not unmelodious, though the resemblance of some of its notes to the running-down of a piece of clockwork is more remarkable than pleasing. The hen is still more soberly attired; but it is perhaps the Siskin's disposition to familiarity that makes it so favourite a captive, and, though as a cage-bird it is not ordinarily long-lived, it readily adapts itself to the loss of liberty. Moreover, if anything like the needful accommodation be afforded, it will build a nest and therein lay its eggs, but it rarely succeeds in bringing up its young in confinement. As a wild bird it breeds constantly, though locally, throughout the greater part of Scotland, and has frequently done so in England, but more rarely in Ireland. The greater portion, however, of the numerous bands which visit the British Islands in autumn and winter doubtless come from the Continent—perhaps even from far to the eastward, since its range stretches across Asia to Japan, in which country it is as favourite a cage-bird as with us. The nest of the Siskin is very like that of the Goldfinch, but seldom so neatly built; the eggs, except in their smaller size, much resemble those of the **GREENFINCH** (vol. xi. p. 165).

A larger and more brightly coloured species, *C. spinoides*, inhabits the Himalayas, but the Siskin has many other relatives belonging to the New World, and in them serious modifications of structure, especially in the form of the bill, occur. Some of these relatives lead almost insensibly to the **GREENFINCH** (*ut supra*) and its allies, others to the **GOLDFINCH** (*ut supra*), the **Redpolls**, and so on. Thus the Siskin perhaps may be regarded as one of the less modified descendants of a stock whence such forms as those just mentioned have sprung. Its striated plumage also favours this view, as an evidence of permanent immaturity or generalization of form, since striped feathers are so often the earliest clothing of many of these birds, which only get rid of them at their first moult. On this theory the Yellowbird or North-American "Goldfinch," *C. tristis*, would seem, with its immediate allies, to rank among the highest forms of the group, and the Pine-Goldfinch, *C. pinus*, of the same country, to be one of the lowest,—the cock of the former being generally of a bright jonquil hue, with black crown, tail, and wings—the last conspicuously barred with white, while

¹ It is also called by bird-fanciers "Abadavine" or "Aberdavine"—names of which the etymology is wholly unknown.

neither hens nor young exhibit any striations. On the other hand, neither sex of the latter at any age puts off its striped garb—the mark, it may be pretty safely asserted, of an inferior stage of development. The remaining species of the group, mostly South-American, do not seem here to need particular notice. (A. N.)

SISMONDI, JEAN CHARLES LEONARD DE (1773-1842), whose real name was SIMONDE, was born at Geneva on May 9, 1773. His father and all his ancestors seem to have borne the name Simonde, at least from the time when they migrated from Dauphiné to Switzerland at the revocation of the edict of Nantes. It was not till after Sismondi had become an author that, observing the identity of his family arms with those of the once flourishing Italian house of the Sismondi, and finding that some members of that house had migrated to France, he assumed the connexion without further proof and called himself De Sismondi. The Simondes, however, were themselves citizens of Geneva of the upper class, and possessed both rank and property, though the father was also a village pastor. The future historian was well educated, but his family wished him to devote himself to commerce rather than literature, and he became a banker's clerk at Lyons. Then the Revolution broke out, and as it affected Geneva the Simonde family took refuge in England, where they stayed for eighteen months. Disliking, it is said, the climate, they returned to Geneva, but found the state of affairs still unfavourable; there is even a legend that the head of the family was reduced to sell milk himself in the town. The greater part of the family property was sold, and with the proceeds they emigrated to Italy, bought a small farm at Pescia near Lucca, and set to work to cultivate it themselves. Sismondi worked hard here, both with his hands and his mind, and his experiences gave him the material of his first book, *Tableau de l'Agriculture Toscane*, which, after returning to Geneva, he published there in 1801. Two years later he published his *Traité de la Richesse Commerciale*, his first work on the subject of political economy, which, with some differences of view, continued to interest him to the end of his life (for his position and work in this respect the reader is referred to the article **POLITICAL ECONOMY**, vol. xix. p. 383). Meanwhile he began his great *History of the Italian Republics*, and was introduced to Madame de Stael. With her he became very intimate, and after being regularly enrolled in the society of Coppet he was invited or commanded (for Madame de Stael's invitations had something of the command) to form one of the suite with which the future Corinne made the journey into Italy, resulting in *Corinne* itself during the years 1804-5. Sismondi was not altogether at his ease here, and he particularly disliked Schlegel, who was also of the company. But during this journey he made the acquaintance of the countess of Albany, Louisa of Stolberg, widow of Charles Edward, and all her life long gifted with a singular faculty of attracting the affection (Platonic and other) of men of letters. She was now an old woman, and Sismondi's relations with her were of the strictly friendly character, but they were close and lasted long, and they produced much valuable and interesting correspondence. In 1807 appeared the first volumes of the above mentioned book on the Italian republics, which (though his essay in political economy had brought him some reputation and the offer of a Russian professorship) first made Sismondi prominent among European men of letters. The completion of this book, which extended to sixteen volumes, occupied him, though by no means entirely, for the next eleven years. He lived at first at Geneva, and delivered there some interesting lectures on the literature of the south of Europe, which were continued from time to time and finally published; and he held an official post,—that of secretary of the chamber of commerce for the then

department of the Leman. In 1813 he visited Paris for the first time and abode there for some years, mixing much in literary society. Although a Liberal and in his earlier days almost an Anglomaniac, he did not welcome the fall of the empire. During the Hundred Days he defended Napoleon's constitutional schemes or promises, and had an interview with the emperor himself which is one of the chief events of a not very eventful life. After the Restoration he left Paris. On completing his great book on the Italian republics he undertook a still greater, the *Histoire des Français*, which he planned on a vast scale, and of which during the remaining twenty-three years of his life he published twenty-nine volumes. His untiring industry enabled him to compile many other books, but it is on these two that his fame chiefly rests. The earlier displays his qualities in the most favourable light, and has been least injuriously affected by subsequent writings and investigations. The *Histoire des Français*, as a careful and accurate sketch on the great scale, has been entirely superseded by that of M. Henri Martin, while it is not to be mentioned, as a work of historical or literary genius, in the same category with that of Michelet. Sainte-Beuve has with benevolent sarcasm surnamed the author "the Rollin of French History," and the praise and the blame implied in the comparison are both perfectly well deserved. In April 1819 Sismondi married an English lady, Miss Allen, whose sister was the wife of Sir James Mackintosh, and the marriage appears to have been a very happy one. His later years were chiefly spent at Geneva, in the politics of which city he took a great, though as time and changes went on a more and more chagrined, interest. Indeed, in his later days he became a kind of reactionary. He died at Geneva on June 25, 1842. Besides the works above mentioned he had executed many others, his custom for a long period of years being never to work less than eight hours a day. The chief of these are *Nouveaux Principes d'Économie Politique* (1819), an historical novel entitled *Julia Severa ou l'An 492* (1822), *Histoire de la Renaissance de la Liberté en Italie* (1832), *Histoire de la Chute de l'Empire Romain* (1835), *Précis de l'Histoire des Français*, an abridgment of his own book (1839), with several others, chiefly political pamphlets.

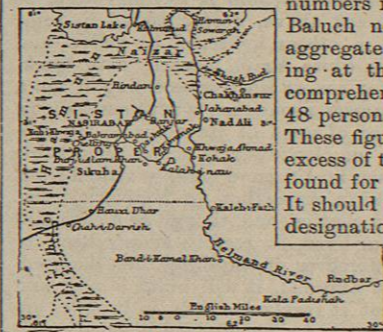
Sismondi's literary character has been hinted at in the above remarks on his French history. He was exceedingly laborious, for the most part (though not entirely) free from prejudice, and never violent even when he was prejudiced. He had (with much "sensitivity") plenty of common sense, though not perhaps any extraordinary amount of acuteness in estimating things uncommon, and he was a little deficient in historical grasp and in the power of taking large views of complicated series of events. His style corresponded to his thought, and (putting aside certain solecisms which French critics usually affect to discover in Swiss writers) lacks point, picturesqueness, and vigour. Of his moral character no one has ever spoken except in terms of praise, and it appears (which is not invariably the case) to have been as attractive as it was estimable. His chief weakness seems to have been a tendency, frequently observable in writers of very great industry, to rank his own productions somewhat too much on a level with those of writers who, if less industrious, were infinitely more gifted. Thus he has somewhere naively observed that "he should not object to signing" a certain proportion of a certain book of Chateaubriand's. But this overvaluation of self appears to have been merely naïf, and not in the least arrogant.

Sismondi's journals and his correspondence with Channing, with the countess of Albany and others have been published chiefly by Mile. Mongolifer (Paris, 1863) and M. de Saint-René Taillandier. The latter work serves as the chief text of two admirable *Lundis* of Sainte-Beuve (September 1865), republished in the *Nouveaux Lundis*, vol. vi.

SISTÁN, or **SEISTAN** (**SEJISTÁN**), the ancient *Sacastane* (*Çakasthāna*, "land of the Sacæ") and the *Nimrās* or "meridies" of the *Vendidad*, is situated generally between 30° 0' and 31° 35' N. lat. and 61° 0' and (including Rudbār) 62° 40' E. long. Its extreme length is about 100 and its breadth varies from 70 to over 100 miles,—but the exact limits are vague, and the modern signification of the name practically comprehends the peninsula formed by the lower

Helmand and its embouchure on the one side and the "Hámún" or "lake" on the other. When British arbitration was brought to bear upon the disputed claims of Persia over this country in 1872, it was found necessary to suppose two territories—one compact and concentrated, which was called "Sistán Proper," the other detached and irregular, called "Outer Sistán." Of each of these a brief description will be given.

1. Sistán Proper is bounded on the north by the "Názár," or reed-bed which fringes the "Hámún" or expanse; west by the Hámún itself, of which the hill called "Kuh-i-Khwájah" marks the central point; south by a line shutting in Sikuha and all villages and lands watered by the main Sistán Canal; and east by the old bed of the Helmand, from a mile above the dam at Kohak to the mouth. Kal'ah-i-nau and Rindan are among the more northerly inhabited villages. The Kuh-i-Khwájah is a sufficient indication of the western side. Búrj-i-Alam Khan should be included within the southern boundary as well as Sikuha. Khwájah Ahmad and Jahánabád, villages on the left bank, or west of the true bed of the Helmand, denote the eastern line. The whole area is estimated at 947 square miles. The fixed population may be roughly stated at 35,000,—some 20,000 Sistánis and 15,000 settlers,—the greater part of whom are Parsiwans, or rather, perhaps, a Persian-speaking people. To the above numbers may be added 10,000 Baluch nomads. Taking the aggregate at 45,000, and looking at the extent of country comprehended, we find nearly 48 persons to the square mile. These figures are eight times in excess of the proportional result found for the whole of Persia. It should be explained that the designation Sistán Proper is not arbitrarily given. The territory comprehended in it is spoken of as Sistán by the dwellers on the right bank of the



Map of Sistán.

Helmand, in contradistinction to their own lands. At the same time it could only be but a fractional part—as indeed the whole country under consideration could only be—of the Sistán of Persian history.

Sistán Proper is an extensive tract of sand and clay alluvium, generally flat, but irregular in detail. It has heaps, but no hills; bushes, but no trees, unless indeed three or four tamarisks of aspiring height deserve the name; many old ruins and vestiges of comparative civilization, but few monuments or relics of antiquity. It is well watered by rivers and canals, and its soil is of proved fertility. Wheat or barley is perhaps the staple cultivation; but pease, beans, oil-seeds, and cotton are also grown. Among fruits, grapes and mulberries are rare, but melons and water-melons, especially the latter, are abundant. Grazing and fodder are not wanting, and besides the reeds peculiar to Sistán there are two grasses which merit notice,—that called *bannu*, with which the bed of the Hámún abounds on the south, and the taller and less salt *kirta* on the higher ground.

2. Outer Sistán, the country on the right bank of the Helmand, and east of its embouchure in the Hámún, extends more than 100 miles in length, or from a point between the Charboli and Khuspas rivers north to Rudbár south. In breadth the district of Chakhansúr, measuring from the old bed of the Helmand, inclusive of Nad Kadah, may be estimated at some 30 miles. It

produces wheat and barley, melons, and perhaps a few vegetables and oil seeds. Beyond the Chakhansúr limits, southward or up to the Helmand, there is probably no cultivation save that obtained on the river bank, and ordinarily illustrated by patches of wheat and barley with melon beds. On the opposite side of the river, in addition to the cultivated portions of the bank, there is a large tract extending from above (*i.e.*, south of) Kohak, or the Sistán dam (*band*), to the gravelly soil below the mountain ranges which separate Sistán from Baluchistan and Narmashir. The distance from north to south of this plain may be computed at 40 miles, and from east to west at 80 or 90 miles. Lands north of the Názár not belonging to the Afghan district of Lash Juwain may also be included in Outer Sistán; but it is unnecessary to make any distinction of the kind for the tract marked "Hámún" on the west, where it merges into the Persian frontier. Bellew states there are 1200 houses in Chakhansúr. This can hardly apply to the fort in which the sardar lives, and the comparatively few houses outside, bearing that name, and noticed by Major Lovett on his visit in 1872. Nor did there then appear to be any other centres of population in the district, excepting perhaps Kadah on the eastern limit. The inhabitants are Sistánis or Parsiwans, Baluch nomads, and Afghans. Between the Kohak *band* and Rudbár they are mainly Baluch. Most of the few nomad tribesmen are Sanjuráni and Toki, the sardars jealously claiming the former appellation.

The most remarkable geographical feature of Sistán generally, in the modern acceptance of the term, is the Hámún, or expanse, which stretches far and wide on the north, west, and south, but is for a great part of the year dry or a mere swamp. In the early spring, at which period the present writer was in the locality, the existence of a lake could only be certified by pools or hollows of water formed at the mouths of the principal feeders, such as the Khash Rúd on the north-east, the Farah Rúd on the north-west, and the Helmand, where its old bed terminates at no great distance from the Khash Rúd. Bellew describes the aspect of that portion of Sistán limited to the actual basin of the Helmand as indicating the former existence of a lake which covered with its waters a considerable area. On the north this tract has been raised to a higher level than the remainder by the deposit at the mouths of rivers of the solid matter brought down. It is still, however, from 200 to 500 feet below the level of the desert cliffs that bound it, and which at some former period formed the shores of the lake; and it is from 50 or 60 to 200 feet above the level of the beds of the rivers now flowing into the existing Hámún. The tract thus raised by depositions in the bed of the former lake, writes the same authority, is now the inhabited district of Sistán, and contains the Hámún, a great sedge-grown swamp, the last relic of the lake itself. To the south of the Hámún and inhabited tract of Sistán is the Zarah hollow. It extends for about 100 miles to the Sarhad Mountains. Called by the natives God-i-Zarah, or the hollow of Zarah, it is described as a wide and circular depression sloping gently up to the bounding hills and desert cliffs. It receives the drainage of these in its central and deepest hollow, which, except in seasons of drought, is more or less marshy. It is connected along the western border of the area with the existing Hámún by the Sar-shila, a great drainage gully through which runs the superfluous flood of the Hámún.

The water-supply of Sistán is about as uncertain as that of Sind, though the general inclination to one bank, the left, is more marked in the Helmand than in the Indus. Therefore the boundary lines given must be received with slight reservation. It is easy to see that a good year of inundation extends the borders of the so-called lake to within the Názár; and there are well-defined beds of dry canals intersecting the country, which prove the existence formerly of an extensive water-system no longer prevailing. The main canal of Sistán, confounded by some writers with the parent river, bears the waters of the Helmand westward into the heart of the country. They are diverted by means of a large *band* or dam, known indifferently as the "Amir's," the "Sistán," or the "Kohak" *band*. It is constructed of horizontally laid tamarisk branches, earth, and perpendicular stakes, and protected from damage by a fort on the left and a tower on the right bank of the river. Although this diversion of the stream may be an artificial development of a natural channel, and undoubtedly dates from a period long prior to recent Persian occupation, it appears that the later arrangements have been more maturely and better organized than those carried on by the pre-

decessors of the amir of Káian. The towns of Deshtak, Chelling, Búrj-i-Alam Khan, Bahramabad, Kimmak, and others of less note are actually on the banks of this main canal. Moreover, it is the indirect means of supplying water to almost every town and village in Sistán Proper, feeding as it does a network of minor canals, by which a system of profuse irrigation is put in force, which, with an industrious and a contented population, should be productive of most extensive grain cultivation. To consider the main canal as the river itself is a theory which a brief inspection of the locality seems quite to disprove. On the one hand we have a comparatively narrow passage abruptly turning to the westward, on the other a broad and well-defined river-bed prolonged in the old direction, into which the waters would at all times flow unrestrained but for an artificial embankment. Whatever arguments, however, may be used on this head, the larger bed is assumed to be the original Helmand for purposes of territorial limitation.

Provisions in Sistán are, as a rule, sufficient, though sheep and oxen are somewhat poor. Bread is cheap and good, being procurable to natives at less than a halfpenny the pound. Vegetables are scarce, and rice is chiefly obtained from Herat. The inundated lands abound with water-fowl. Partridges and sand-grouse are occasionally seen. River fish are plentiful enough, but confined to one species, the barbel.

The inhabitants of Sistán are mainly composed of Kaiyánis, descendants of the ancient rulers of the land; Sarbandis and Shahrakis, tribes supposed to have consisted originally of immigrants from western Persia; and Baluchis of the Nharui and Sanjurani (Toki) clans. Bellew separates the "Sistánis"; but it is a question whether this term is not in a large measure applied to fixed inhabitants of the country, whatever their descent and nationality. For instance, an old Shahraki guide to the Sistán Mission of 1872 persisted in being a "Sistání"; and, if his definition be accepted, the outside element must be confined to Baluchis and modern settlers only.

History.—The ancient Drangiana (Zaraya, Darañka, "lake land") received the name of "land of the Sacæ" after this country was permanently occupied by the "Scythians" or Sacæ, who overran Iran in 128 B.C. (see PERSIA, vol. xviii. pp. 594 *sq.*). It was included in the Sásanian empire, and then in the empire of the caliphs. About 860 A.D., when it had undergone many changes of government under lieutenants of the Baghdad caliphs, or bold adventurers acting on their own account, Ya'kúb b. Láith made it the seat of his power. In 901 it fell under the power of the Sámánids, and a century later into that of the Ghaznavids. An invasion of Jaghatais and the irruption into its richer lands by Timúr are salient points in the history of Sistán prior to the Safawid conquest (1508). Under this dynasty for more than two centuries, or up to 1722, Sistán remained more or less a Persian dependency. At the time of the Afghan invasion of Mir Mahmúd (1722), Malik Muhammad Kaiyáni was the resident ruler in Sistán, and by league with the invader or other intrigue he secured for himself that particular principality and a great part of Khorasan also. He was slain by Nadir Kuli Khan, the general of Shah Tahmasp, who afterwards, as Nadir Shah, became possessor of Sistán as part of his Persian dominions. Shortly after the death of Nadir (1751) Sistán passed, together with other provinces, into the hands of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the first sovereign in a united Afghanistan. On the death of Ahmad Shah in 1773 the country became a recognized bone of contention, not so much between Persians and Afghans as between Herat and Kandahar; but eventually the internal dissensions of Afghanistan gave Persia the desired opportunity; and by a steady course of intrigue and encroachment she managed to get within her grasp the better lands on the left bank of the lower Helmand and something on the right bank besides. When the British arbitrator appeared on the scene in the beginning of 1872, though compelled to admit the shah's possession of what has been called "Sistán Proper," he could in fairness insist on the evacuation of Nad Ali, Kala Fath, and all places occupied on the right bank by Persian troops; and furthermore he left to the Afghans both sides of the river Helmand from the dam of Kohak to its elbow west of Rudbár. For the precise boundary see PERSIA, vol. xviii. p. 619.

See Eastern Persia, vol. i.; Bellew's *Records of Sistán Mission*; *Journal of R. Geog. Society*, vol. xliii. (1873).

SISTOVA, a town of Bulgaria, at the head of a district of its own name (40,893 inhabitants in 1881), is situated on the right bank of the Danube, about 40 miles above Rustchuk, and has rather a picturesque appearance on the slopes of the Kadbar and the Chuka. On the latter hill there stood till the fire of 1810 a mediæval fortress, and previous to the 15th century it contained a Latin church of traditional celebrity. The lower town along the river consists of modern houses, mostly erected since 1870, and is the scene of busy commercial life, especially during the

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grain-export season. The principal church, completed in 1867, is a large and costly building with an imposing dome. Sistova was one of the first of the Bulgarian towns to introduce the national language into its schools (1833), some of which are now well-endowed and flourishing. More than half the inhabitants, who numbered 11,560 in 1881, are Bulgarians, the rest being Turks, Walachians, and Gipsies.

Sistova is identified with the old Roman colony *Novæ* mentioned by Ptolemy and others. The exact site appears to have been Staklen, a cluster of vineyards with remains of ancient buildings to the west of the present town, which has gradually moved eastward since the 16th century, when it was reduced by the Turkish wars to a miserable village. It was at Sistova that the peace of 1790 was signed, by which the Austrian-Turkish boundary was determined. The town was burned in 1810 by the Russian general Saint Priest; but subsequent to 1820 it began to revive, and the introduction of steam traffic on the lower Danube (1835) restored its prosperity in spite of the effects of the Russian war of 1828-29, when the Walachian town of Alexandria was founded by fugitives from Sistova. In 1877 the Russians entered Bulgaria by passing the river just below Sistova.

SISTRUM, a kind of rattle used by the ancient Egyptians in religious ceremonies, especially in the worship of Isis. It consisted of a frame through which passed four rods; attached to the frame was a handle. When shaken the rods rattled and produced the sound. After the introduction of Egyptian worship into Italy the Romans became familiar with the sistrum. It is described by Apuleius (*Metam.*, xi. 4). An ancient sistrum formerly existed in the library of Ste Geneviève at Paris. In paintings found at Portici a priest of Isis and a woman are represented rattling the sistrum. The instrument is said to be still in use in Nubia and Abyssinia.

SISYPHUS, a famous character of Greek mythology, was a son of Æolus and Enarete and brother of Cretheus, Athamas, and Salmeon. He built Ephyra (Corinth), and married Merope, daughter of Atlas, by whom he had a son Glaucus. According to Pausanias (ii. 3, 11) Sisyphus succeeded Medea in the sovereignty of Corinth. Having found the body of the drowned Melicertes lying on the shore of the isthmus, Sisyphus buried him and instituted in his honour the Isthmian games. From Homer onwards Sisyphus was famed as the craftiest of men. His name (formed by reduplication from the same root as *σοφός*) means the Wise, Wise One. When Death came to fetch him, Sisyphus put him into fetters, so that no one died till Ares came and freed Death, and delivered Sisyphus into his custody. But Sisyphus was not yet at the end of his resources. For before he died he told his wife that when he was gone she was not to offer the usual sacrifice to the dead. So in the under world he complained that his wife was neglecting her duty, and he persuaded Hades to allow him to go back to the upper world and expostulate with her. But when he got back to Corinth he positively refused to return to Deadland; so he lived to a good old age, and even then Hermes had a tough job to carry him off. In the under world Sisyphus was compelled to roll a big stone up a steep hill; but before it reached the top of the hill the stone always rolled down, and Sisyphus had to begin all over again. The subject was a commonplace of ancient writers, and was depicted by the painter Polygnotus on the Lesche at Delphi.

The way in which Sisyphus cheated Death is a common incident in folk-tales. Thus in a Venetian story the ingenious Beppo ties up Death in a bag and keeps him there for eighteen months; there is general rejoicing; nobody dies, and the doctors are in high feather. In a Sicilian story an innkeeper corks up Death in a bottle; so nobody dies for years, and the long white beards are a sight to see. In another Sicilian story a monk keeps Death in his pouch for forty years. (See Crane, *Popular Italian Tales*, Nos. 63, 64, 65, 66, with the translator's notes.) The German parallel is *Gambling Hansel*, who kept Death up a tree for

seven years, during which no one died (Grimm, *Household Tales*, No. 82; in his notes Grimm cites a number of German parallels). The Norse parallel is the tale of the Master Smith (Asbjörnson og Moe, *Norske Folke-Eventyr*, 21; Dasent, *Popular Tales from the Norse*, p. 106). For a Lithuanian parallel, see Schleicher, *Litauische Märchen, Sprichwörter, Rätsel, und Lieder*, p. 108 sq.; for Slavonic parallels, Krauss, *Sagen und Märchen der Südslaven*, ii., Nos. 125, 126.

SITÁPUR, a British district in Sitápur division or commissionership of Oudh, under the jurisdiction of the lieutenant-governorship of the North-Western Provinces of India. It lies between 27° 7' and 27° 53' N. lat. and between 80° 21' and 81° 26' E. long., and it is bounded on the N. by Kheri district, on the E. by that of Bahraich, from which it is separated by the Gogra river, and on the S. and W. by Bara Banki, Lucknow, and Hardoi districts, the Gumti river forming the boundary. Sitápur district is elliptical in shape; its greatest length from south-east to north-west is 70 miles, and its extreme breadth from north-east to south-west 55 miles; its area is 2251 square miles. Being without hills or valleys, and devoid of forests, Sitápur presents the appearance of a vast plain sloping imperceptibly from an elevation of 505 feet above sea-level in the north-west to 400 feet in the south-east. The country is, however, well wooded with numerous groves, and well cultivated, except in those parts where the soil is barren and cut up by ravines. It is intersected by numerous streams, and contains many shallow ponds and natural reservoirs, which overflow during the rains, but become dry in the hot season. Except in the eastern portion, which lies in the doabs or alluvial plains between the Kewáni and Chauka and the Gogra and Chauka rivers, the soil is as a rule dry, but even this moist tract is interspersed with patches of land covered with saline efflorescence called "reh." The principal rivers are the Gogra, which is navigable by boats of large tonnage throughout the year, and the Chauka. Nylghau, many varieties of deer, wild hog, wolf, jackal, and fox are common, but none of the larger wild animals are found within the district. The climate is considered healthy, and the cantonments of Sitápur are famous for the low mortality of the British troops stationed there. The average annual rainfall is about 33 inches. The district contains no railway, but it is well provided with good unmetalled roads.

In 1881 the population was returned at 958,251 (505,986 males and 452,265 females); Hindus numbered 818,738, Mohammedans 138,738, and Christians 443. Sitápur contains but two towns with more than 10,000 inhabitants,—namely, Khairabad, 14,217, and Laharpur, 10,437. The administrative headquarters of the district are at Sitápur town, which is prettily situated on the banks of the Sarayan river, with good groves in all directions, and with a population in 1881 of 6780. Of the total district area 1455 square miles are cultivated and 510 are cultivable. The principal staples are wheat, barley, joar, gram, bajra, and rice; besides these a considerable quantity of sugar-cane is raised, as also oil seeds, cotton, and tobacco. The only manufactures of any note are tobacco and tacias at Biswán, with a little cotton printing and weaving in most of the towns. The history of Sitápur is closely associated with that of the rest of Oudh. The district figured prominently in the mutiny of 1857, when the native troops quartered in the cantonments rose in mutiny and fired on their officers, many of whom were killed, as were also several military and civil officers, with their families, in attempting to escape. Order being restored in 1858, the Government offices were re-opened, and nothing has since occurred to disturb the peace of the district.

SITTINGBOURNE, an ancient town of Kent, is situated on a navigable creek of the Swale, and on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, at the junction for Sheerness, 7 miles south from the latter town and 45 east-south-east of London. It consists principally of one long street and the northern suburb of Milton, formerly celebrated for its oysters, the fishery of which used to employ a large number of the inhabitants. Brickmaking is a very important industry, and there are large paper-

mills. St Michael's church, in the Early English and later styles, underwent extensive restoration in 1873 at a cost of nearly £3000. The principal other public buildings are the old town-hall, the corn exchange (erected 1859), and the museum. Public gardens 10 acres in extent have recently been laid out. The local government board was instituted in 1878. The population of the urban sanitary district (area 1004 acres) in 1871 was 6148 and in 1881 it was 7856.

Sittingbourne, or Sedyngburne, received a grant of a market and two annual fairs by a charter of Queen Elizabeth. The style "guardian and free tenants," applied to the corporation in this charter, was subsequently changed to that of "mayor and jurats." See W. A. Scott Robertson, *Sittingbourne and the Names of Lands and Houses in or near it*, Sittingbourne, 1879.

SIÚT, or ASYÚT (ASIOOT), more correctly OSYÚT, a town of Upper Egypt, and southern terminus of the railway on the left bank of the Nile, by which it is 229 miles from Búlák Dakrúr. The population is about 25,000. See EGYPT, vol. vii. p. 775.

SIVA. See BRAHMANISM.

SIVÁS, or SÍWÁS, a pashalic and capital of a pashalic of great importance in Asia Minor. The town is situated on the right bank of the Kizil Irmak (Halys), in a plain of some 16 to 20 miles in length and 4 to 6 in breadth. From the south the approach is by a good road among the mountains, and the aspect from the heights is pleasing. Dotted here and there with trees, some in large extended clusters, the houses and citadel cover a considerable space and appear much scattered. On the north a military road has been constructed to facilitate communication with the coast. Sivás is 4670 feet above the level of the Black Sea, and should be a healthy residence for Europeans. The population, estimated on the spot in 1864 at 10,000 houses, more than a fifth being Armenians, is stated in Murray's *Handbook* of 1878 to consist of 5000 Turkish and 1200 Armenian families. There are some respectable residences but not many buildings or monuments of note; and the streets are narrow and ill-maintained. The bazaars are fairly stocked with goods, British as well as of other European nations.

Sivás is the ancient *Sebasteia* (not to be confounded with Sebaste or Cabira on the Lycus, the modern Niksar), the capital of Armenia II., and the seat of an archbishop. In 1021 it was ceded by the emperor Basil to the Armenian king, Senekharim. It again became Greek in 1080, but soon after fell to the Seljüks. In the 13th century Marco Polo speaks of Sevaste as the place "where the glorious Messer Saint Blaise suffered martyrdom." It was, when he wrote, in the possession of the Turkmans of Karmania, living under the government of the Seljük princes. In the 14th century we have the testimony of Ibn Batuta, who says (ii. 289):—"It is one of the possessions of the king of Irak, and the largest town owned by him in the country. His chiefs and his collectors reside there. It is well-built, and has wide streets and crowded markets." Colonel Goldsmid visited Sivás in July 1864, and was shown some fine monuments described as the mausolea of the Seljüks, the inscriptions on which he found to date no earlier than 670 of the Hijra, though the actual tombs might be traceable to a former period.

SIXTUS I. (Xystus) figures in the lists accepted by the Roman Church as having been bishop of Rome from about 119 to about 126. He is conjectured to have been a presbyter and a martyr.

SIXTUS II. followed Stephanus I. as bishop of Rome in 257, and suffered martyrdom under Valerian in the following year. He restored the relations with the African and Eastern Churches which had been broken off by his predecessor on the question of heretical baptism. Dionysius succeeded him.

SIXTUS III., bishop of Rome from July 31, 432, to August 18, 440, had Celestinus I. as his predecessor, and was succeeded by Leo I.

SIXTUS IV. (Francesco della Rovere), pope from 1471 to 1484, was born 21st July 1414, near Savona. The statements respecting his parents' situation in life are

very conflicting. In consequence of a vow made by his mother he entered the Franciscan order at an early age, and speedily acquired a great reputation for eloquence and learning. After filling several minor offices he became general of his order, and in 1467 was to his own surprise made cardinal by Paul II., at the recommendation, it is asserted, of Cardinal Bessarion. When, upon Paul's death in 1471, the rigour of Bessarion's principles prevented his profiting by the favourable sentiments of influential cardinals, who, nevertheless, expected to be recompensed for their suffrages, Rovere seems to have been found more accommodating. The liberality of his donations after his election, at all events, raised suspicion; but the friendship of Bessarion has also been enumerated among the causes of the sudden elevation of the most recent member of the Sacred College. He was elected on 9th August 1471, and immediately proceeded to lavish Paul's treasures—partly in laudable preparations against the Turks; partly in embassies, receptions of foreign princes, public improvements, and other expenses possibly imprudent, but at least not indecorous; partly, without any excuse, upon his unworthy nephews, Count and Cardinal Riario. The prodigalities of the latter surpassed all measure, and he compromised his uncle much more seriously by his complicity in the conspiracy of the Pazzi, aiming at the assassination of the Medici family. Sixtus was cognizant of the plot, but had positively forbidden the shedding of blood, which he must nevertheless have known to be inevitable. He deserves still more censure for entering into a fruitless and inglorious war with Florence, which terminated in 1480, after having kept Italy for two years in confusion. Scarcely was it over when he allowed himself to be involved in yet more troublesome and discreditable contests,—first inciting the Venetians to attack Ferrara, and then, after having been delivered by their general Roberto Malatesta from a Neapolitan invasion, turning round upon them and eventually assailing them on their refusal to desist from the hostilities which he had himself instigated. He relied on the co-operation of Lodovico Sforza, who speedily forsook him; and the scandal was witnessed of the secular princes and cities of Italy agreeing to a peace which the Father of Christendom did his best to thwart, and vexation at which was believed to have hastened his death. He died, at all events, a few days afterwards, 13th August 1484, leaving an unfortunate reputation as the first pope who brought nepotism into politics, and, not content with enriching his relatives by gifts and lucrative offices, made their aggrandizement the principal object of his policy as a secular prince. His private character was nevertheless estimable: he was pious, of blameless morals, hospitable and munificent to a fault, and so exempt from avarice, says his secretary Conti, that he could not endure the sight of money. His faults were those of a monk who had no natural outlet for strong affections except unworthy relatives, and who had been called from a cloister to fill the most conspicuous position in the world. His secular policy was capricious and spasmodic; he neither maintained the peace of Italy like his predecessor and successor nor carried out a consistent and well-considered scheme of conquest like Alexander VI. He was, notwithstanding, always firm in his resistance to the Turks, and showed magnanimity by aiding his enemy the king of Naples against the common foe of Christendom. The brilliant side of his administration was his munificence as a founder or restorer of useful institutions and a patron of letters and art. He established and richly endowed the first foundling hospital, built and repaired numerous churches, constructed the Sixtine Chapel and the Sixtine Bridge commissioned paintings on the largest scale, pensioned ar-