

ASIA.

TURKEY IN ASIA.

THE Asiatic possessions of the Turks consist of several provinces, called *pachalics*, over each of which presides a pacha, or governor, appointed by the Grand Signor. The prevailing religion is Mohammedanism; but as the population is made up of numerous tribes, it is more mixed with other professions than in Europe. The languages are various; but Turkish, Greek, and Arabic, predominate.

The manners and customs of Asiatic Turkey are as diversified as the population. The *Turk* is in all places the same idle and haughty being; but in Asia his morals are better than those of his European brethren: he is hospitable to strangers; he builds caravanserais, or places of refreshment, for poor pilgrims and travellers; and he searches out the best springs, and digs wells, with the same benevolent intention; the vices of avarice and inhumanity are chiefly confined to the great. The *Greek* of Asia differs little from his countrymen in Europe. The *Armenian* is commercial, patient, economical, and indefatigable, traversing the interior of the country in all directions in quest of gain. The

Arab maintains his wandering, hospitable, and predatory character here, as well as in his own country; and the *Jew*, in the land of his forefathers, is a despised vagabond, destitute of a home, and subjected to continual insult and oppression.

One of the most striking features in this division of the Turkish empire is, that part of its population is resident, while the other is composed of wandering hordes, who range with their flocks and herds over vast tracts of country, and pitch their tents, or remove them, as occasion or convenience may require.

THE TURCOMANS.

THESE people are the reputed stock from which the Turks sprang; but the sedentary life of the one, and the roving habits of the other, have given to each such distinctive characteristics, that scarcely anything is left them in common. The Turcomans dwell in tents, and migrate from place to place, as the season and want of pasturage for their flocks require. They claim a right of plundering all who pass through what they call "their territory," without first seeking their protection, and acknowledging their sovereignty by a present. When their friendship is once gained, they are punctual to their engagements; but will furnish nothing to their guests, except at exorbitant prices.

The Turcomans, in their persons, are tall, straight, muscular, and well-proportioned, with an appearance of exhaustless health and vigor. Their language, which is clear and sonorous, is fitted to paint the stronger passions, and to express, in forcible and laconic terms, the mandates of authority. The women are masculine and active, with good, but not fascinating features. They perform all the harder kinds of labor required by the family; and are occasionally reminded of their duty by the whip, which their husbands generally have in their hands.

From the rising of the sun to its disappearance in the evening, the men are employed in smoking, inspecting their cattle, or visiting and conversing with their acquaintance. At night, they watch for plunder, and reckon robbery to be honorable, in proportion to the ingenuity of its contrivance, or the audacity of its execution. These people are found in most parts of Asia Minor; but seldom descend into Syria, beyond the plains of Antioch and Aleppo.

INHABITANTS OF ALEPPO.

ALEPPO is the capital of Syria, and the chief town of Asiatic Turkey. The population is made up of Turks and Arabs, with some Christians, and a few Jews. The people in general are of the middle stature, and tolerably well proportioned; but they seem neither vigorous nor active. The

men are considered as the most polished in the Turkish dominions; and the women are distinguished by their mild and affable behavior. In Aleppo, a degree of cleanliness is observed, that is unknown to all other Turkish cities. The houses are large and commodious, but consist only of a single story, with terraces on the tops, where the inhabitants walk to enjoy the cool of the evening, and where they sleep during the summer. All the inhabitants, of both sexes, smoke tobacco to great excess; the very servants having almost constantly pipes in their mouth.

THE KURDS.

THE proper residence of these people is in the country called Kurdistan, where some of them are settled in villages, and employed in agriculture; but the greater portion are a pastoral people, ranging, with their herds and flocks, over the eastern regions of Asiatic Turkey. Their internal government is of the feudal kind; and as they are merely tributaries to the Turks, they pay little respect to the orders of the Sultan. Their religion is a mixture of Mohammedan and Pagan rites. They reside in tents: and their property consists in sheep, with some goats, camels, and buffaloes. They exact a tribute from travellers through their territories; but when their faith is once plighted, no apprehensions need be entertained of their want of sincerity.

THE DRUZES.

THESE singular people inhabit part of Syria, particularly about Mount Lebanon; and are by some supposed to be descendants of the old Croisaders, who were left in the Holy Land; but they are more likely of Arabic origin. Though tributary to the Turks, they have long resisted the attempts of those people to bring them into subjection: they have their own hereditary princes; and as every man capable of bearing arms is considered a soldier, an army of 40,000 men is raised on the first signal for war. They rarely descend to the plains, but glide among the rocks and thickets of the mountains, and are consequently dangerous enemies. They affect the external demeanor of Mohammedans, but may be said to be destitute of all religion. They are jealous in points of honor, and never forgive injuries; yet they are hospitable, and would share their last morsel with a weary traveller, if he applied to them for assistance.

THE ARMENIANS.

THESE people, originally from Armenia, the ancient name of the province of Turcomania, are divided into different tribes; of which some are governed by independent chiefs, while others acknowledge a nominal subjection to the Turks

or the Persians. They profess the Christian religion, but have peculiar tenets.

In manners and customs, the Armenians very much resemble the Jews: they also manifest a strong disposition to rove from home, and much of the trade in Persia, as well as in Asiatic Turkey and the Levant, is carried on by them.

RUSSIA IN ASIA.

THIS very extensive tract, which constitutes little more than a nominal part of the Russian empire, contains a great variety of tribes, who pay indeed a certain tribute to the court of Petersburg, but are in other respects, independent both of it and of each other. Where the Russians have settlements, the government, laws, and religion, are the same as in the parent state; but neither are in full energy; and education is little known. The country is divided into two distinct parts, Caucasus, in the south-west, and Siberia, which, with Kamtschatka, comprehends the remainder.

The mountainous region, which constitutes the south-west extremity of Asiatic Russia, has always been inhabited by rude tribes, under proud and warlike chiefs, who have never yielded more than a nominal subjection to the successive empires that have swayed the sceptre of Asia.

The Russian population of Siberia consists of persons banished to that desert region, to work in the mines, for

imputed state crimes, with the governors and troops, who are appointed to superintend them. The rest is composed of independent tribes, mostly of Tartar origin. The eastern extremity of Asiatic Russia, which includes the peninsula of Kamtschatka, is supposed to have been peopled from the neighboring shores of North America.

THE CIRCASSIANS.

ALTHOUGH these people are much celebrated on account of the beauty of their females, the reader will not be much prepossessed in their favor, when he learns that their name, which is of Tatar origin, is indicative of a *brigand*, or *highwayman*. They consist of many tribes who occupy the mountainous districts, between the Black Sea and the Caspian, whence they make predatory excursions to the swampy plains at their base. They are composed of princes, usdens or nobles, vassals, and slaves. The princes and nobles are despotic over their vassals, and exact the greatest portion of the fruits of their labors, scarcely leaving them the means of existence. The princes also have the power as well of unmaking as of making usdens, whom they can in a moment deprive of all they possess, and reduce them to a state of vassalage, or slavery. The religion professed by most of these people is the Mohammedan; some are Pagans; and others make a profession of Christianity.

The Circassians have been long celebrated for the beauty of their features, and the symmetry of their form; and not without reason. They are middle sized, rarely exceeding five feet eight or nine inches in height; and are finely shaped, and very active. They bear in their countenance a most striking expression of ferocious valor, cunning, suspicion, and distrust. The women are finely shaped, have very delicate features, and a fascinating perfection of countenance. Their feet are remarkably small, an effect of their forcing them when young into very tight slippers; and their slender waists, which are considered as the grand essential of beauty, are produced by tight lacing in leathern belts.

These people, in their common attire, have the legs, feet, and arms, with a considerable portion of the body naked. They wear no shirt, and only a pair of coarse ragged drawers, reaching a little below the knee. Over their shoulders they carry, even in the midst of summer, a heavy thick cloak of felt, or the hide of a goat with the hair outwards, reaching below the waist. Under this covering appear the sabre, musket, bow, quiver, and other weapons.

The Circassians are excellent equestrians; their horses are high-bred Arabians, and extremely fleet; and they so much excel the Cossacks in horsemanship, that the latter acknowledge their inability to overtake them in pursuit.

When a prince, or usden, pays a visit in full dress, he arrays himself with all his accoutrements, and occasionally

puts on a jacket of mail. When people of the lower class do not carry a sabre with their other arms, they have a strong staff, about four feet and a half in length, with a large iron head at one end, and a sharp iron pike, about eighteen inches long, at the other, which they can throw like a dart, with great accuracy.

The head-dress of the females consists of a cap, somewhat resembling that of the other sex, but drawn up at top in form of a crown. Under this, the hair is turned up in a thick queue, which is also covered with a piece of fine linen. When females go abroad, they wear high wooden clogs, to keep their feet clean, and draw mittens over their delicate hands.

The houses or huts of these people are made of platted osiers, plastered within and without, and covered with straw. Forty or fifty of them placed in a circle, constitute a village. The utmost cleanliness prevails in these dwellings, as well as in the persons, dress, and cookery of the inhabitants. Each family has two of these huts; one appropriated to the use of the husband and the reception of strangers; the other to the wife and family. At meals, the whole family is assembled together; their food is extremely simple, consisting only of a little meat, some millet paste, and a fermented beer, made of the same grain.

The Mohammedan Circassians bury their dead with the face towards Mecca; and the moollah, or priest, reads some

passages from the Koran at the funeral, for which he is usually rewarded with the best horse of the deceased. Black is worn for a twelvemonth, except for such as are slain in battle with the Russians, whose spirits are believed to pass immediately into paradise: so great is the merit deemed of opposition to that nation, which they utterly abhor.

THE GEORGIANS.

THESE people occupy a great part of the southern declivity of the Caucasus; and are in many respects similar to the Circassians in their customs and manners. They make a profession of Christianity; but it is not certain to what particular creed they are attached, nor what forms of worship they have adopted.

The Georgians are in general tall, well proportioned, and elegant in shape; and their language is soft, harmonious, and expressive; but their minds, unrestrained by education and virtuous habits, are depraved and vicious.

The dress of the Georgians nearly resembles that of the Cossacks; though men of rank frequently appear in the Persian costume. They usually dye their hair, beard, and nails, of a red color; and the women do the same to the palms of their hands. In the streets, women of rank always appear veiled; and there it is deemed indecorous in any

man to accost them. It is, likewise, reckoned uncivil in conversation to inquire after the wives of any of the company.

Punishments in criminal cases are in this country of the most cruel and terrific nature; fortunately, however, they are not frequent, as well because delinquents can easily abscond into neighboring districts, as because the princes are more enriched by confiscations of property, than by the tortures of the accused.

The clergy are paid liberally, not by the living, but by the dead. At the death of a Georgian, the bishop requires one hundred crowns, for performing the funeral rites; and this extravagant demand must be satisfied, though the widow and children of the deceased be ruined by it, which is frequently the case.

THE MINGRELIANS.

THESE people, seated in the ancient country of Colchis, between the Black Sea and Mount Caucasus, are generally handsome; the men strong and well made, and the women very beautiful: but both sexes are very depraved. They sell their children; or if they can find no purchasers, put them to death, when they have difficulty in bringing them up.

The bread used by the superior classes is made of wheat,

barley, or rice; and, when eating, they sit cross-legged upon a carpet. The lower orders, for want of bread, eat a kind of paste made of a plant, called *gom*; and they sit upon a mat, or bench.

The nobility exercise an absolute power over their vassals, even to the deprivation of life, liberty, and estate. Their arms are bows, arrows, lances, sabres, and bucklers.

The Mingrelians call themselves Christians; but both their clergy and laity are utterly ignorant of the Christian doctrines, and their service is intermixed with Jewish and Pagan rites. The dignitaries of the church are clad in scarlet; the inferior clergy are distinguished from the laity by the length of their beards, and by their high round caps, which are also common to their inferiors. Among the idols, with which their churches are filled, those of St. George and St. Grobas engage their principal attention.

On the death of their friends, these people, in common with the Georgians, abandon themselves to inordinate grief; but at the interment, they wash it all away with copious potations. Their chief cause of concern, however, arises from the surrender, which the bishop requires, of all the moveables of their departed relative, whether they consist of horses, arms, clothes, or money.

THE TATARS.*

THESE people are divided into numerous clans, or hordes, each of which has some peculiar manners; but our limits will allow little more than a general view of them. They have in all ages been a wandering people, renowned for their invincible courage and surprising conquests. China, Hindoostan, Persia, and part of Europe, have all witnessed their prowess, and been subjugated by their arms. They, nevertheless, disdain the confinement of a sedentary life, and on every return of the spring, recommence their peregrinations. When they find a fertile spot, they pitch their tents, and when all the produce is consumed, remove in quest of a fresh supply.

Each Tatar horde is under the direction of its own khan, or leader; but they all acknowledge a principal khan, who bears the assuming title of *King of Kings*, and derives his descent from the great Tamerlane, who led them through a succession of conquests in the beginning of the 15th century. Slavery has no place among these people, except that they sell their captives taken in war. To avoid every appearance of servitude, they carefully shun all regular

*These people have been improperly called *Tartars*: but Tatar is the indigenal, oriental, and proper orthography, the accent lying on the last syllable.

employments; and the greatest malediction they bestow upon one who has incurred their displeasure, is, that he "may have a fixed abode and labour like a Russian!" The Russians, are, indeed, objects of their most sovereign contempt.

The prevailing religion of these people is Mohamedism; but as they recede from the centre of their primitive plains, they become, in this respect, assimilated to their neighbors: hence some make a profession of Christianity according to the Greek or Russian creed; others are Gentoos; and numbers are Pagans of the grossest description. In all cases, they are extremely superstitious.

The genuine Tatar is of the middle size; and, though thin, strong and robust. His complexion, though dark, is ruddy and lively; his countenance is open and friendly; and his body well proportioned, with an easy respectful deportment. He is fierce, warlike, and fond of hunting; despising fatigue, attached to independence; and frequently inhumanly savage. The bloom of health and symmetry of shape cause the females to rival in personal charms the women of most European countries. Temperance and cleanliness are characteristics in both sexes.

The wealth of the Tatars consists in their flocks and herds, which they exchange with the Russians and other traders for clothes for themselves and families. Their dress consists principally of large calico shirts and drawers,

capacious boots, and small round caps of leather, edged with fur. The dress of the females differs little from that of the men. Red is the colour highest in esteem with the Tatars: their chiefs, though otherwise meanly attired, seldom fail to have a scarlet robe for state occasions; and a woman of quality would not think herself well dressed, were she without a garment of this hue.

As the Tatars in general neither sow nor reap, nor make hay for their cattle, vegetables scarcely form any part of their diet: a little millet is the only grain they use, and this but sparingly. They live upon horseflesh, mutton, fish, wild fowl, and venison; but are not fond of beef or veal. They have plenty of milk, butter, and cheese; but mare's milk is always preferred; and from this they make a very strong spirit of which they are very fond.

The ordinary dwellings of the Tatars consist of small tents, of an oval form, covered with a kind of felt; the small aperture which serves for a door, always faces the south. Even the houses, or palaces, of the great, are no more than wooden huts, that may be conveniently fixed on large waggons, and drawn by a team of twenty or thirty oxen.

All the Tatars are excellent riders, and constant practice has given them so firm a seat, that they have been supposed to perform the ordinary duties of civil life, to eat, to drink, and even to sleep without dismounting. They excel in the

management of the lance: the long Tatar bow is drawn with a nervous arm, and the arrow is directed to its object with almost unerring aim and irresistible force.

The respect paid by children to their fathers, who are considered as kings of their families, is very great; but they pay little attention to their mothers. They lament the death of a father many days. Some of the tribes burn their dead, and bury the ashes on an eminence, over which they raise a heap of stones, and set up a small banner; but the greater number of the Pagan Tatars bury them, and with each man his best horse and other valuable articles, for his use in the future world. Others throw their dead into open fields to be devoured by dogs, numbers of which are kept and suffered to run wild for this very purpose.

The Tatars of the CRIMEA are partly erratic, partly sedentary. The habitations of the latter are generally built with stone, cemented with calcareous clay, and rarely consisting of more than one story. Like the Turkish dwelling, they have no windows towards the streets; their fronts being in a contrary direction. The houses, even of the poorest, are extremely clean, being frequently whitewashed; the floor is generally of earth, but smooth, firm and dry, and covered with mats or carpets.

These people, the most comely of their race, wear a striped silk and cotton shirt, with a short tunic, over which they have a caftan, or eastern robe, tied about the middle

with a sash: to these are added loose drawers and short boots. The female costume is very similar to that of the Turkish ladies.

The children are early taught to read, and to copy the manuscripts of the Koran, with which every house is furnished, generally in very beautiful characters; and in every village persons are appointed to superintend their education. The refinements of these people, compared with the manners of their nomadic brethren, have not destroyed the characteristic hospitality, as is too frequently the case in other nations.

The JAKUTSCHIANS, or *Yakutians*, a tribe of Tatars occupying the regions extending from Jakutsk to the Frozen Ocean, and eastward to the vicinity of Ochotsk, are partly stationary, residing in villages composed of *yourts*, or huts, chiefly constructed of wood: others are nomadic, and live in tents. The former dwellings are square, with the fireplace in the centre; and round the walls are earthen seats, sodded, and separated by partitions, which also serve for sleeping upon. The tents of the erratic tribes are conical, and composed of long poles, covered with the bark of trees. These people are industrious, inoffensive, and hospitable. Some have embraced Christianity, but the greater part of them are pagans, believing in the influences of evil spirits, to whom they attribute all the ills that befall them, and whom they endeavour to conciliate by a variety of ridiculous in-

cantations. The clothing of the wealthy consists of the skins of reindeer; the poorer sorts are clad in horses' skins. They generally wear boots, in the hinder part of which they carry their wooden pipes; for they are fond of smoking. Their principal food consists of fish, beef, and horseflesh; the last of which is their greatest dainty.

The TUNGUSES, or *Tungusian Tatars*, chiefly roam from the banks of the Lena to the Eastern Ocean, and are known under various denominations. They consider removal from place to place as essential to health and cleanliness, and rarely pitch their tents for more than a few days at a time. They live in isolated families, and have little or no intercourse with each other. Their tents are composed of a few poles stuck in the ground, tied together at the top, and covered with bark. They keep great numbers of reindeer; and their dress is composed of the skins of that animal, or of the wild sheep. In winter, they wear the skins with the hair on; in summer, they have them dressed. They are always on the watch for objects of chase, and pay little attention to the effects of heat and cold. Those who dwell on the coast have more regular and fixed habitations, and consort together at certain seasons for hunting and fishing. The Tungusians are Pagans: they have their sorcerers, and sacrifice to evil spirits; but they are faithful to their word, and punctual in their dealings.

The UZBECS roam in numerous hordes, over the great

plains of Karasm and Bukharia, during the summer; but in the winter season they reside in villages. They are considered as one of the most spirited and active of the Tatar tribes; and live chiefly by rapine. They are no strangers to the use of the musket; and even the women, who are among the most beautiful of the Tatar females, frequently accompany their husbands to the hostile field. Their language has a great affinity to the Turkish; and their character generally resembles that of the Turcomans.

The KIRGUESES, who are divided into three hordes, denominated *the Great, the Middle, and the Less*, occupy the northern parts of Independent Tartary, where they lead a pastoral life, and dwell in tents made of a kind of felt, and easily removed. They consider each other as brethren; but do not hesitate to plunder their neighbours when opportunity offers.

THE CALMUCKS.

THESE people, though commonly considered as Tatars, are in reality a tribe of the Mongols, or Moguls, who have themselves been also improperly confounded with the Tatars. The Calmucks, who are extensive wanderers, are to be found in nearly the whole of Asia, north of India, and China; and even in the southern parts of European Russia, to the banks of the Dnieper. They are distinguished

by peculiarity of features and manners from the surrounding Tatar tribes. Their personal appearance is athletic and revolting; their skin nearly black; their hair coarse, and their language extremely harsh. The men, who are frequently of gigantic stature, have no other clothing than a piece of cloth about the waist. The women who are uncommonly hardy, have broad, high cheek bones, very small eyes, set at a great distance apart; scarcely any eyebrows, broad flat noses, and enormous ears. The Calmuck women are fond of tobacco, which they smoke in short pipes; and they are renowned riders, often outstripping their male companions in the chase.

These people dwell in conical tents, called *khabitka*, constructed with cane, covered with a thick camels' hair felt, and placed on waggons, for convenience of removal without taking them down. Several arts, generally considered to be peculiar to civilized nations, are here to be met with; and, from time immemorial, they have possessed that of making gunpowder.

The Calmucks are as cheerful as they are robust; seldom dejected by sorrow, never subdued by despair. Being less indolent than most other Asiatics, they are highly esteemed as servants in all parts of the Russian empire; but Cossacks only will intermarry with them. They generally attain an advanced age, and are even then able to bear the

fatigues of horsemanship. Old age is much honored among them.

When fully equipped for war, the Calmuck wears a steel helmet, with a gilt crest, from which a network of iron hangs over part of his face, neck, and shoulders. He has also a jacket of similar work, which adapts itself to all positions of the body; or, in lieu of this, he puts on a coat of mail, composed of small tin plates. His weapons are a lance, a bow and arrows, a poniard, and a sabre. Fire-arms, being considered a mark of distinction, are borne only by the richest.

THE KAMTSCHATDALES.

THESE people occupy a peninsula near the eastern extremity of Asiatic Russia. They are few in number, diminutive in stature, wild in their manners; and, though baptized in the Christian religion in compliance with the will of the Russians, they are still idolaters. Hunting and fishing constitute their chief employment; in both which they are dexterous and persevering; frequently pursuing their game over rocks and precipices where few others would venture.

Their dress consists of a cotton shirt with a loose frock and trowsers of reindeer skin. Their boots are of tanned leather, and their cap is of fur; but garments of any kind

of skins, stripped of the hair and made pliable, are common. On holidays, the women frequently put on a silk gown, after the old Russian manner, with party-coloured kerchiefs about their heads. The women do all their work in mittens; and use both white and red paint profusely.

These people formerly lived in hovels excavated in the ground, some of which are even now existing; though, in most instances, they have been exchanged for the log huts of the Russians. In the south, these huts are raised on posts to the height of twelve or fifteen feet. The inland Kamtschatdales build their villages in thick woods and other naturally strong places, at a distance from the sea, but have summer habitations near the mouths of rivers. Those who live on the coast, build their villages very near the shore. To kindle fire, they rub a small round stick in a hole perforated through a dry board till it takes fire; and instead of tinder, they use dried grass beaten soft.

The diet of these people consists chiefly of fish, prepared in various ways; and they are particularly fond of *caviar*, made of the roes of fish. They also very much esteem a dish, which they call *huigul*, consisting of fish that has been laid in a pit till it becomes sour, or rather putrid; and though the smell is intolerable to all others, to a Kamtschatdale the odour is an exquisite perfume, and the article itself an absolute luxury. The flesh of land and large sea animals they boil with different herbs and roots. The fat



Kamtschatdales.

Finlanders.

of the whale and walrus they also boil with roots; and a principal dish at all their feasts, which they call *selaga*, is made by pounding roots and berries, of various kinds, with caviar, and mixing up the whole with whale or seal fat.

As reindeer have become scarce in Kamtschatka, and horses cannot easily be supported, the natives train their dogs to draw their sledges, on which they travel with surprising velocity over the snow. Each dog has a particular name, which is of great use in driving them, as they are managed by the voice, and the jingling of rings or shells fastened to a stick; neither reins nor whip being used by the rider.

ARABIA.

THE Arabs are an ancient people; and the various tribes derive their descents, some from Heber and his son Jocktan; some from Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar; others from the descendants of Abraham and Keturah; and not a few from Esau, the brother of Jacob. The Ishmaelites, better known under the title of *Bedouins*, are the most pure of these races, for they lead a wandering life, and will not intermarry with the settled tribes, lest they should degrade their pedigree.

The Arab is not robust, but rather tall, well-formed, and active, fearless of danger, and insensible to fatigue: his mind



Arabians.

East Indians of Distinction. P. 146.