

lest a king, that is, there is a king for every seven tribes : there is also a kind of nobility among them, from whose families alone the sovereign can be chosen. But there are certain degrees of merit (all warlike) that raise, from time to time, their Plebeian families to nobility, and the right of suffrage. No one of these nobles can be elected till past 40 years of age, unless he has slain with his own hand a number of men which, added to his years, make up forty.

The council of each of the seven tribes first meet separately in its own district. Here it determines how many are necessary to be left behind for the governing, guarding, and cultivating the territory, while those fixed upon by most votes go as delegates to meet the representatives of the other nations, at the domicil, or headquarters of the king, among the tribe from which the sovereign of the last seven years was taken. Here they sit down under a tree, which seems to be sacred, and the god of all nations. It is called Wanzey; has a white flower, and great quantity of foliage, and is very common in Abyssinia. After a variety of votes, the number of candidates is reduced to four, and the suffrage of six of these nations go then no farther; but the seventh, whose turn it is to have a king out of their tribe, choose, from among the four, one, whom they crown with a garland of wanzey, and put a sceptre, or bludgeon, of that wood in his hands, which they call buce.

The king of the western Galla is styled Lubo, the other Moory. At this assembly the king allots to each their scene of rapine and murder; but limits them always to speedy returns, in case the body of the nation should have occasion for them. The Galla are reputed very good soldiers for surprize, and the first attack, but have not constancy for perseverance. They encompass incredible marches, swim rivers, holding by the horses tails, (an exercise to which they and their horses are perfectly trained) do the utmost mischief possible in the shortest time, and rarely return by the same way they came. They are excellent light horse for a regular army in an enemy's country.

Iron is very scarce among them, so that their principal arms are poles, sharpened at the end, and hardened in the fire, which they use like lances. Their shields are made of bulls hides, of a single fold, so that they are very subject to warp in heat, or become pliable and soft in wet weather. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the report of their cruelty made such an impression on the Abyssinians, that, on their first engagement, they rarely stood

firmly the Gallas first onset. Besides this, the shrill and very barbarous noise they are always used to make at the moment they charge, used to terrify the horses and riders, so that a flight generally followed an attack made by Galla horse.

These melancholy and frantic howls I had occasion to hear often in those engagements that had happened while I was in Abyssinia. The Edjow, a body of Galla who had been in the late King Josa's service, and were relations to him by his mother, who was of that clan of southern Galla, were constantly in the rebel army, and always in the most disaffected part, who, with the troops of Begemder and Lasta, attacked the king's household, where he was in person; and, though they behaved with a bravery even to rashness, most of them lost their lives, upon the long pikes of the king's black horse, without ever doing any notable execution, as these horses were too well trained to be at all moved with their tricks, when they charged, though their bravery and fidelity merited a better fate.

The women are said to be very fruitful. They do not confine themselves even a day after labour, but wash and return to their work immediately. They plow, sow, and reap. The cattle tread out the corn, but the men are the herdsmen, and take charge of the cattle.

Both sexes are something less than the middle size, exceedingly light and agile. Both, but especially the men, plait their hair with the bowels and guts of oxen, which they wear likewise, like belts, twisted round their middle; and these, as they putrify, occasion a terrible stench. Both copiously annoint their heads and bodies with butter, or melted grease, which is continually raining from them, and which indicates that they came from a country hotter than that which they now possess. They greatly resemble the Hottentots in the filthy taste of dress. The rest of their body is naked; a piece of skin only covers them before, and they wear a goat's skin on their shoulders, in shape of a woman's handkerchief, or tippet.

It has been said, that no religion was ever discovered among them. I imagine that the facts upon which this opinion is founded, have never been sufficiently investigated. The Wanzey tree, under which their kings are crowned, is avowedly worshipped for a god in every tribe. They have certain stones, also, for an object of their devotion, which I never could sufficiently understand to give farther description of them: but they certainly pay adoration to the moon, especially the new moon, for of this I have frequently