

On the 7th of October I crossed the ruins of Nineveh, and the next day entered the mountains of central Koordistan, in which I spent the two most interesting months of my life. My visit of seven weeks to the Nestorian patriarch, and the numerous population of those almost inaccessible mountains, where no European had ever penetrated, will, I trust, result in consequences which shall make angels and men rejoice and give glory to God. The way now is open, from this side or the other, into that most important and promising field; and I trust the day is not distant when the voice of the heralds of salvation and the high praises of our God shall echo and re-echo through all those glens and rocks and valleys; and when from every hamlet and village healing streams shall flow forth to make the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.

So entirely had the Lord prepared the way before me, that I not only travelled in perfect security through the wild mountains of the careless Koord; but even their chiefs, whose hands were so recently stained with the blood of the unfortunate Shultz, the last, if not the only European traveller who had entered their country,—even these sanguinary chiefs treated me with the greatest kindness and attention, and repeatedly urged me to return and take up my abode in their country. Among the mountains of Tearey those independent Christians who had been represented as more reckless and savage than the wildest Koords, welcomed me as a brother and benefactor, making me feel more at home than I had done in all my route before. The only one of that tribe I had seen was one whose eyes I opened more than a year ago, and in the first village I entered I was most agreeably surprised to see him come with a cordial welcome, bearing in his hand a pot of honey in token of gratitude for the restoration of his sight.

For nearly five weeks I was a guest of Mar Shimon, 'patriarch of the East,' with whom I had most interesting conversations on the subject of the improvement of his people and raising up from the midst of them many preachers of righteousness, who should go forth with the glad tidings of life and salvation to the dying millions of this benighted portion of the earth. The response which the patriarch gave was most encouraging, and I only regretted that I could not at once commence with a band of faithful missionaries, and open schools in every large village, in some of which are not less than four thousand native Christians; and in various ways prepare the ground and sow the seed, which should spring up and bear fruit to everlasting life—nay I should rather say, reap the abundant harvest which is fully ripe and

fast falling into the earth; for many centuries ago was the good seed sown here by the apostles or their immediate successors, while the ground was watered by their prayers and tears.

Long before the blood-stained banners of Mohammed waved over these devoted lands, churches had been erected, which still remain as monuments of the zeal and enterprise of those early disciples of our Saviour; and it seems as though the everlasting mountains were, by a special providence, raised around them as walls and bulwarks to defend them against the sword of the destroyer, which swept over every other portion of these countries with desolating fury. Amidst all the devastating wars and commotions which have raged around, this chosen band has been kept as in the pavilion of the Most High. Verily 'the earth helped the woman' when the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood to destroy her.

So difficult of access is this asylum of the Nestorian church, that I was obliged to walk for three days, while passing through their country, the roads being too difficult for the hardy mules trained on the ground to traverse them in safety. And you may judge of the strength of the outposts, when I tell you that one of their castles, which, as tradition says, was occupied as a strong hold during the time they were beset by the armies of Mohammed and Omar, was ascended by means of iron pins driven into the lofty perpendicular rock on which the fortress was built.

Continually was the comparison forced upon me between these sons of the Assyrian mountains and the Waldenses of the Alps, both alike pursuing the light of the Bible in the midst of the deep darkness which reigned all around them; and most confidently do I hope that the Nestorians will prove to Asia what the Waldenses were to Europe—a bright morning star ushering in a yet more resplendent and glorious day.

As I told the patriarch and his people of the low state of the western church in those dark days, a new hope seemed to kindle in their bosoms; and more than once did they, in allusion to the parables of our Saviour, say that they trusted there was still a 'little heaven' in those mountains, which, by God's blessing, would yet be widely diffused. Though they were now as 'a grain of mustard seed,' yet when watered by the dews of God's Spirit, their branches might spread over all these lands.

They often spoke of the early labours and success of their forefathers, and eagerly drank in the encouragement I presented to put forth untiring efforts and prayers for the return of those golden days, when, as they themselves say, their missionaries, churches, and schools