

the inhabitants having been addicted to impure forms of worship, were changed by the wrath of Heaven into stones, and in that state left forever above ground, to be a terror and a warning to future generations. As to the lions who climb and grin on the walls of Baku, they were, say the Muslims, the gods of its ancient inhabitants, whom, when the day of trial came, they were found impotent to protect.

Liko all regions impregnated with fire, this part of Persia produces exquisite fruit. Large and delicious figs have been still found on the trees as late as month of December, and the pomegranates which nature brings to perfection in the hottest months seem to be fuller of refreshing juice than in almost any other part of the East. When you arrive, therefore at a caravansary on a July noon, the first thing with which the attendant presents you, in a saucer of white porcelain, is a pomegranate—you break it, you inhale the delicious aroma, you sip the pinky juice, and your weariness vanishes like a dream. Along the volcanic rocks, the vine trails its tendrils, and early in summer is covered with heavy clusters, purple or golden. These the children of the Prophet, in spite of the Koran, often convert into wine, with which to regale themselves in their banishment beyond Kaf. Every one who has travelled in volcanic countries must have observed that the grape has there a far richer flavor than elsewhere, which appears at once to excite and allay thirst. This is particularly noticeable on the slopes of Etna and Vesuvius, but in the neighborhood of Baku it is perhaps more remarkable still. The wines made in this province are those chiefly celebrated by the Persian poets, who, because they drank them in the bowers of Shiraz or Isfahan, imagined they were the produce of the south. In the low marshy grounds close to the Caspian, you find water-melons, scarcely if at all, inferior to those of Calamata in the Morea, which, when cut into slices, look like sweet water held in suspension by a net-work of fibres. These, with the apples of Shirwan, and the dates of Irak and Diarbekir, the Persians prefer to all the fruits of India, the anana, the mango, and the mangoosteen, because they detect in them the flavor of their ancient fatherland. As they eat, they dream of the past, when the sword of the Mede was a

terror to the world—when he disciplined the finest cavalry, and erected the finest structures in Asia—when he was victorious wherever he marched—and when his sacred fire threw its glare on one side over the Nile, and the other over the Indus. It may be that Bumsctee Cursetjee, as he prostrates himself before the eternal fires of Baku, dreams that days of equal glory may yet dawn upon his race, when he shall cease to twist ropes and build ships for white infidels from the West, when he shall be no longer a by-word to the Brahman or the Mo-lem-in, but with the sword of victory in one hand, and the sacred fire in the other, shall drive the believers in the Book out of Iran, and enjoy a flaming millennium in the beautiful land which was the birthplace and cradle of his race.

### The Catacombs of Rome.

The city of Rome is in nearly the same latitude as Hartford, Connecticut. Its circumference is about 15 miles, inclosed by a wall which has upon it 30 towers. Its catacombs were the excavations, where the early Christians lived, worshipped, and were buried. They are cut through a kind of volcano stone and their extent is extraordinary. You descend to them through the church of St. Sebastian, which is two miles outside of the city, and they have been explored to the length of eighty miles. Other catacombs have been discovered, but this is the principal one. On the way to this church you pass the tomb of the Scipios, men of whom we have read in history, and whose relics, only found in 1780, have been buried 2,300 years. The passages in the catacombs are 8 to 10 feet high, and from 13 to 15 feet wide. These paths have tiers of tombs on either side, large and small cut into the rock and closed up with slabs of marble, covered with inscriptions.