

## RED SEA.

The Red Sea occupies a deep, rocky cavity, extending about one thousand one hundred and sixty miles in length, and its mean breadth may be taken at about one hundred and twenty. Strabo has compared its shape to that of a broad river; and it does not receive the waters of a single tributary stream. The name greatly puzzled the ancients, and has occasioned in later times a display of much superfluous learning to determine whether it was derived from the colour of the water, the reflection of the sand-banks, and the neighbouring mountains, or the solar rays struggling through a dense atmosphere. These various conjectures are set at rest; both the air and water are unusually clear; the theory of King Erythrus is exploded; and the name is now admitted to be merely a Greek translation of the "sea of Edom," (a Hebrew word denoting Red,) so frequently mentioned by the sacred writers. Its surface is diversified with a number of islands; some of which, such as Koteble, and Gebel Tor, near Loheia, exhibit volcanic appearances. The western coast is bold, and has more depth of water than the eastern, where the coral rocks are gradually encroaching on their native element. These reefs are found dispersed over the whole gulf, rising, in some places, ten fathoms above the water. The bottom is covered with an abundant harvest of this substance as well as of certain plants; and, if examined in calm weather, it has the appearance of verdant meadows, and submarine forests; phenomena which procured for this gulf the appellation of Yam Zuph, from the Jews, and Bahr Souf, from the Arabs, signifying (in both languages) the "Sea of Green Weeds." These beautiful productions attracted the admiration of antiquity. Strabo seems to allude to them when he speaks of trees, resembling the laurel and the olive, growing at the bottom and along the eastern coast of the Red Sea, which at ebb-tide were left uncovered, though at other times they were wholly

under water; a circumstance deemed the more surprising, when contrasted with the nakedness of the adjacent shores. Burckhardt remarks, that the coral in the inlet of Akaba is red, and that in the gulf of Suez the white is chiefly to be seen;—facts which may reconcile the discordant statements of Bruce, Valentia, Henniker, and other modern travellers.

All who have frequented the Red Sea, have observed the luminous appearance or phosphorescence of its waters. "It was beautiful," says a graphic writer, who sailed from Mocha to Cosseir, "to look down into this brightly transparent sea, and mark the coral here in large masses of honeycomb-rock, there in light branches of a pale red hue, and the bed of green sea-weed, and the golden sand, and the shells, and the fish sporting round the vessel, and making colours of a beauty to the eye, which is not their own. Twice or thrice we ran on after dark for an hour or two; and though we were all familiar with the sparkling of the sea round the boat at night, never have I seen it in other waters so superlatively splendid. A rope dipped in it and drawn forth, came up as a string of gems; but with a life, and light, and motion, the diamond does not know." Those sculights have been explained by a diversity of causes; but the singular brilliancy of the Red Sea seems owing to fish-spawn and animalculæ; a conjecture which receives some corroboration from the circumstance, that travellers who mention it, visited the gulf during the spawning period—that is, between the latter end of December and the end of February. The coral banks are less numerous in the southern parts. It deserves notice, that Dr. Shaw and Mr. Bruce have stated, (what could be true, only so far as their own experience went,) that they observed no species of weed or flag; and the latter proposes to translate Yam Zuph, "the Sea of Coral," a name as appropriate as that of Edom.—*Andrew Crichton.*

## THOUGHTS ON NATIONAL HUMILIATION.

AND ON THE DUTIES OF CANADIAN CHRISTIANS TO THEIR COUNTRY AT THE PRESENT CRISIS.

(Continued from page 3.)

[The true christian is the best of patriots.—He is enabled to say that he prefers the things which concern the kingdom of the Saviour above his chief joy. He who can say with a believing

heart "the Lord will hear my prayer and incline his ear to my cry," stands on a high vantage ground.] Here, indeed, is an influence, here a dignity and power which are not sought