

fifty or sixty women, all equal in stature and strength to myself. The whole of my clothing was, like theirs, a long loose shirt of blue Surat cotton cloth, reaching from the neck down to the feet. The only terms I could possibly, and that with great difficulty, make for myself were, that they should be contented to strip me no farther than the shoulders and breast. Upon seeing the whiteness of my skin, they gave all a loud cry in token of dislike, and shuddered, seeming to consider it rather the effects of disease than natural. I think in my life I never felt so disagreeably. I have been in more than one battle, but surely I would joyfully have taken my chance again in any of them to have been freed from that examination. I could not but help likewise reflecting, that, if the king had come in during this exhibition, the consequence would either have been impaling, or stripping off that skin whose colour they were so curious about; though I can solemnly declare there was not an idea in my breast, since ever I had the honour of seeing these royal beauties, that could have given his majesty of Sennaar the smallest reason for jealousy; and I believe the same may be said of the sentiments of the ladies in what regarded me. Ours was a mutual passion, but dangerous to no one concerned.'

Mr. Bruce one evening narrowly escaped assassination, but he succeeded in throwing down and disarming the wretch. On the king being informed of this circumstance, he only observed 'that the man was drunk, and that the people in that country were not used to see Franks walking in the street.' The king also observed, that Mr. Bruce, he was informed, had 2,000 ounces of gold, besides a quantity of silver, and that he was not a physician but an Indian merchant. These circumstances determined our traveller to keep close at home.

The kingdom of Sennaar was inhabited by Arabs only till the year 1504, when they were conquered by a tribe of negroes, who embraced Mahometanism, that they might trade with Cairo. The great officers can order the king to be put to death when they please, and an officer is appointed to execute this sentence when they chuse to pronounce it; and this strange executioner is received at court without either malice