

set our pot, with rice or bruised wheat ; and when we had supped, the merchants went on board to sleep, while the mariners lay down for the night on the shore, as near the boats as they could. At many places on the river side we met with troops of Arabs, of whom we bought milk, butter, eggs, and lambs, giving them in barter, for they care not for money, glasses, combs, coral, amber, to hang about their necks ; and for churned milk we gave them bread and pomegranate peels, with which they tan their goat skins which they use for churns. The complexion, hair, and apparel of these Arabs, are entirely like to those vagabond Egyptians who heretofore used to go about in England. All their women, without one exception, wear a great round ring of gold, silver, or iron, according to their abilities, in one of their nostrils, and about their legs they have hoops of gold, silver, or iron. All of them, men, women, and children, are excellent swimmers, and they often brought off in this manner vessels with milk on their heads to our barks. They are very thievish, as I proved to my cost, for they stole a casket belonging to me, containing things of good value, from under my man's head as he lay asleep.

At Bir the Euphrates is about as broad as the Thames at Lambeth, in some places broader, and in others narrower, and it runs very swiftly, almost as fast as the Trent. It has various kinds of fish, all having scales, some like our barbel, as large as salmon. We landed at Feluchia on the 28th of June, and had to remain there seven days for want of camels to carry our goods to Babylon, [Bagdat,] the heat at that season being so violent that the people were averse from hiring their camels to travel. Feluchia is a village of some hundred houses, and is the place appointed for discharging such goods as come down the river, the inhabitants being all Arabs. Not being able to procure camels, we had to unlade our goods, and hired an hundred asses to carry our English merchandize to New Babylon, or Bagdat, across a short desert, which took us eighteen hours of travelling, mostly in the night and morning, to avoid the great heat of the day.

In this short desert, between the Euphrates and Tigris, formerly stood the great and mighty city of ancient Babylon, many of the old ruins of which are easily to be seen by day-light, as I, John Eldred, have often beheld at my good leisure, having made three several journeys between Aleppo
and