

south, and at about two P. M. we reached the point where the road takes its course to the west. In this spot we found one of the stations, as before mentioned; it is called Kafafeet. We continued till the evening, and arrived at Habookady, near a mountain in form of a bell, in the valley of Wady el Gimal: we saw abundance of the trees *egley*, and the plant like rushes, called *murk*.

The 20th, early, we set off, and passed through a wide plain. As we left the mountain, and arrived at Habookroog, a place that appears to be at the entrance of the chain of mountains that leads to the Nile, our camels were so tired they could hardly crawl: we had lost three on the road, and one we expected would not last long. It is difficult to form a correct idea of a desert without having been in one; it is an endless plain of sand and stones, sometimes intermixed with mountains of all sizes and heights, without roads or shelter, without any sort of produce for food. The few scattered trees and shrubs of thorns, that only appear when the rainy season leaves some moisture, barely serve to feed wild animals, and a few birds. Every thing is left to nature; the wandering inhabitants do not care to cultivate even these few plants, and when there is no more of them in one place, they go to another. When the trees become old, and lose their vegetation in such climates as these, the sun, which constantly beams upon them, burns and reduces them to ashes. I have seen many of them entirely burnt. The other smaller plants have no sooner risen out of the earth than they are dried up, and all take the colour of straw, with the exception of the plant *harack*; this falls off before it is dry. Speaking in general of a desert, there are few springs of water, some of them at the distance of four, six, and eight days' journey from one another, and not all of sweet water; on the contrary, it is generally salt or bitter, so that if the thirsty traveller drinks of it, it increases his thirst, and he suffers more than before; but when the dreadful

calamity happens that the next well, which is so anxiously sought for, is found dry, the misery of such a situation cannot be well described. The camels, which afford the only means of escape, are so thirsty that they cannot proceed to another well; and if the travellers kill them to extract the little liquid which remains in their stomachs, they themselves cannot advance any farther. The situation must be dreadful, and admits of no resource. I must not omit what I have been told happens in such cases.

Many perish victims of the most horrible thirst. It is then that the value of a cup of water is really felt. He that has a *zenzabiu* of it is the richest of all. In such a case there is no distinction; if the master has none, the servant will not give it to him, for very few are the instances where a man will voluntarily lose his life to save that of another, particularly in a caravan in the desert, where people are strangers to each other. What a situation for a man, though a rich one, perhaps the owner of all the caravans! He is dying for a cup of water—no one gives it to him—he offers all he possesses—no one hears him—they are all dying—though by walking a few hours farther they might be saved,—the camels are lying down, and cannot be made to rise—no one has strength to walk—only he that has a glass of that precious liquor lives to walk a mile farther, and perhaps dies too. If the voyages on seas are dangerous, so are those in the deserts: at sea, the provisions very often fail; in the desert it is worse: at sea, storms are met with; in the desert there cannot be a greater storm than to find a dry well: at sea, one meets with pirates—we escape—we surrender—we die; in the desert they rob the traveller of all his property and water; they let him live perhaps—but what a life! to die the most barbarous and agonising death. In short, to be thirsty in a desert, without water, exposed to the burning sun, without shelter, and no hopes of finding either, is the most terrible situation that a man can be placed in; and, I

believe, one of the greatest sufferings that a human being can sustain : the eyes grow inflamed, the tongue and lips swell : a hollow sound is heard in the ears, which brings on deafness, and the brains appear to grow thick and inflamed :—all these feelings arise from the want of a little water. In the midst of all this misery, the deceitful morasses appear before the traveller at no great distance, something like a lake or river of clear fresh water. The deception of this phenomenon is well known, as I mentioned before ; but it does not fail to invite the longing traveller towards that element, and to put him in remembrance of the happiness of being on such a spot. If perchance a traveller is not undeceived, he hastens his pace to reach it sooner ; the more he advances towards it, the more it goes from him, till at last it vanishes entirely, and the deluded passenger often asks where is the water he saw at no great distance : he can scarcely believe that he was so deceived ; he protests that he saw the waves running before the wind, and the reflection of the high rocks in the water.

If, unfortunately, any one falls sick on the road, there is no alternative ; he must endure the fatigue of travelling on a camel, which is troublesome even to healthy people, or he must be left behind on the sand, without any assistance, and remain so till a slow death come to relieve him. What horror ! What a brutal proceeding to an unfortunate sick man ! No one remains with him, not even his old and faithful servant ; no one will stay and die with him ; all pity his fate, but no one will be his companion. Why not stop the whole caravan till he is better, or do what they can for the best till he dies ? No, this delay cannot be ; it will put all in danger of perishing of thirst if they do not reach the next well in such a time ; besides, they are all different parties generally of merchants or travellers, who will not only refuse to put themselves in danger, but will not even wait a few hours to save the life of an individual, whether they know him or not.

In contrast to the evil, there is the luxury of the desert, and also its sport, which is generally at the well ; there one enjoys all the delight of drinking as much water as one likes, which tastes not unlike cordials or other precious liquors, with the others in that situation. The beasts, mixed with birds, drink together close to the well. There is a kind of basin made of clay which is filled up by the drivers, from the well, where the thirsty animals all drink together, camels, sheep, dogs, donkeys, and birds, as it is the only time they can partake of that liquid ; for if it is not drawn up from the well, they cannot reach it. I only saw four species of birds, viz. the vulture, crow, wild pigeon, and partridge ; of this last we eat some, and found them exceedingly good : the crows are the most numerous ; they tease the camels by picking their wounds, if they have any. The other and most pleasing diversion is the beautiful damsels who come as shepherdesses to water their flocks, who, after being assured that there is no danger in approaching strangers, become more sociable. On such occasions, our observing their gestures afforded us great amusement : but, our water skins filled, and the camels loaded, we were obliged to quit these dear spots, with the hope of meeting another like it in a few days, and so on till we reached the blessed Nile ; but the journey was pleasant enough this day, as we had a well only within a few hours. We set off at two in the morning of the 20th, and, before noon, reached the well at Hamesh, containing very good water. Here we lost another camel ; he could not go any farther. We set off again in the afternoon, and arrived at a place at the foot of a mountain of granite. Early on the 21st, we set off again, and soon entered the ravine of granite rocks, that reminded us of the cataract which we saw on our passing before. After this, we arrived at the station of Samout, which we also saw before at the same time. We arrived at night at Dangos, where the mountains are not very high, and of calcareous stone. From the cataract, and nearly down to